When Moonlight is Very Hot

Selection and English Translation of Tulu Work Songs and Dance Songs

Translation by
B. Surendra Rao and **K. Chinnappa Gowda**

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Karnataka Tulu Sahithya Academy
Mangaluru

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The President's Words

It is with great sense of pride and pleasure that I write these words to introduce and commend the English translation of Tulu *Kabitas* or work songs and dance songs, *When Moonlight is Very Hot*. The translators, B. Surendra Rao and K. Chinnappa Gowda, have been, of late, working at introducing the riches of Tulu literature and folklore to English readers, and Karnataka Tulu Sahitya Academy deems it an honour to publish this latest work of theirs. Serious academic ventures and promotion are part of the agenda which the Academy has been pursuing. Tulu needs to draw upon the unlimited literary and cultural opulence from other tongues and cultures, while it should feel confident to present its own riches to the rest of the world. That, we are sure, will help us claim the rightful status of honour to Tulu and to those who speak that language. Such serious publications will enable us to stake Tulu's claims for inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. There is nothing wrong in supplementing sloganeering and political pressures with serious academic argument.

Although serious Tulu Movement was launched in the 1930's under the leadership of S.U. Paniyadi, N.S. Kille, Polali Sheenappa Hegde and others and later many individuals and associations did yeoman's service for the Tulu cause, an institutional base and support was provided to it when Karnataka Tulu Sahitya Academy was established in 1994. Since then it has undertaken and coordinated several programmes like seminars, conferences, publications, awarding the worthies and so on. The Academy has kept the Tulu awareness alive. The World Tulu Conference which was held at Ujire (2009) under the leadership of Dharmasthala Dr. Veerendra Heggade was significant not only in proclaiming the glory of Tulu and its culture but also as a statement of management skill. Successive Presidents of the Academy and their teams have been working on the ways of bringing

together individual efforts of promoting Tulu in the region and outside.

I should clarify that all our talks about Tuluva identity and cultural riches do not for a moment suggest separatism. The region is spectacularly bilingual or multilingual. There is no tyranny of any one language here. It has cultivated Kannada passionately and has accommodated other languages and their speakers generously. But the fact remains that in what is culturally Tulunadu, the language is Tulu. The majority here has Tulu as its mother-tongue. It also has, for various geographical and historical reasons, evolved a Tulu culture, which is both unique and accommodating. While it is comfortable with the entrenched multilingual life, the continued non-recognition of Tulu leaves a bad taste in the mouth. To be told that it is one of the great five Dravidian languages and yet being consigned to political neglect reeks of cruel sarcasm. Hence this continued scream about Tulu's recognition and its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

The Tulu Academy wants to continue the long tradition of publishing Tulu works of substance, including journals and children's books. We want to pursue the work of popularising the study of Tulu at the school level and make it a worthy academic language. We plan to sponsor translations of books from other languages to Tulu and of Tulu works into other languages. This excellent translation of Tulu *Kabitas* and dance songs, the first of its kind, should blaze a new trail and inspire others to labour for the Tulu cause. I congratulate the translators, B. Surendra Rao and K. Chinnappa Gowda, for their excellent work and thank them for allowing us the privilege of publishing it. I thank all the members of the Academy for supporting me in all my endeavours, including the publication of this work. I thank the Registrar of the Academy, Sri Chandrahasa Rai, for helping me in the matter in every way. I thank Kallur Nagesh of Aakriti Prints for the neat and elegant printing of the book.

Mangaluru
10th February 2018

A.C. Bhandari
President
Karnataka Tulu Sahitya Academy, Mangaluru

About the Menu on offer

When in the middle of the nineteenth century Bishop Caldwell hailed the glory of the Dravidian languages, he was quick to highlight the richness of Tulu. Though it had remained largely a spoken language, its antiquity was shown to be unmistakable and the opulence of its oral literature no less noticeable, which clearly redounded to the credit of a civilized people. Tulu did have a rich written tradition, no less, but owing to certain compelling historical circumstances it had retreated to the back-burner, which has recently been 'discovered' with pride and profit. But what enjoyed an unbroken life in Tulu is its oral tradition in the form of *pāḍdanas,* or oral epics, folk stories, folk songs and dance songs, folk games, folk medicines, as also proverbs, adages and riddles that have gone to the making of the Tulu folklore. Largely rooted in the agrarian universe of the region, they have curious alliance with the peculiar social and religious beliefs and institutions which Tulunadu has developed. They have drawn both enthusiastic and critical attention of scholars and dilettantes, and Tulu folklore is today a much-cultivated area of interest. *pāḍdanas* have been the favourite subject of scholarly attention, both indigenous and foreign. The other fields of Tulu folklore have also been taken up for study, but they are largely available only to Tulu or Kannada readers. Of late we have ventured to convey the substance and spirit of Tulu folktales to the English readers. In the same mood we have made an attempt to select some of the Tulu work songs and dance songs and translate them into English, perhaps for the first time. This anthology of fifty-three folk songs is the result of such an attempt.

The folk songs presented here can be broadly divided into 'Work Songs' and 'Dance Songs', although we have included a few lullabies too. The more famous *pāḍdanas,* or Tulu folk epics, should be distinguished from what are offered here. The *pāḍdanas* are long, - some of them truly

of epic proportions. The *Siri* epic as sung by Machaar Gopala Naika alone has 15,682 lines; Kōṭi-Chennaya *sandi* has more than ten thousand lines. They are associated with certain possession-cults and rituals of Tulunadu. They present or explain the cults, both in their origins and spread. The Tulu work songs, or *Kabitas,* on the other hand, are short. They are connected to agriculture and the labour that goes into it. They are mostly sung by women, while planting seedlings on the paddy fields, to bring in a rhythm to the work, as also to relieve the tedium of labour and whistle away fatigue. However, certain *pāḍdanas* are sung in the non-ritual contexts too, like plucking the seedlings for replanting, toddy-tapping or even when the carter is on duty. But the time of *Kabita* singing is rainy season, which can be both exciting and harrowing. Exciting, because it is time to cultivate your sustenance; harrowing, because agricultural operations take place when rains come pelting down, when everything is damp and slushy. The *pāḍdanas* are mostly sung in the ritual context by one person to be followed by another appointed co-singer, accompanied by a drummer. But work songs are sung by a team of women singers, with a lead singer and a chorus of singing. In fact, a good *Kabita* singer was sought after as part of the team of women at work. She could be the lead singer, to launch the refrain of the song and later, to sing the stanza next, to be followed by the chorus singing of other women. The group may be of discrete people, women of different castes, both old and young. The singing of *Kabitas* can also mean learning to sing them. The occasion is both for rehearsal and performance. The lead singer is expected to possess high-pitched voice, preferably melodious. The freedom which she enjoys as lead singer demands that she has certain poetic sensibilities and familiarity with the ways of the world. The lead singer is the leader of the pack, who decides which song should be sung and in what sequence. She should decide on the appropriateness of the song to the context of the labour. The whole exercise of singing produces a fraternity of singing and working women that transcends individual caste or sectarian identities, but constitutes a larger female identity among those who toil and sing. However, the work songs cannot claim any definite author

or composer; folklorists recognize the singer herself as the creator of the song, which, therefore, does not preclude variants.

The context of the *Kabitas* should enable us to appreciate the structure of work songs. The reader may find tedious repetition of refrains, details of artefacts, animals, or such other matters recounted in them. If we are able to recognise that they were composed to sing rather than written for a critical study, these details and refrains can be accommodated with little discomfort. In fact, these refrains act as so many pauses that enable the toiling women to draw fresh breath, construct the stanza next and proceed with the singing. An arm-chair composition of poetry, on the other hand, makes less demand on physical strain. The *Kabitas* revolve around certain stock themes and descriptions: they could be of ornaments, animals, vegetables, festivals and so on. The repetitions go well with the collective singing that takes place in the paddy fields. Since it is not the same group singing in the same place or context, repetitions do not sound like repetitions.

The work songs, however, carry some images and messages. They are freighted with certain world-views and wish-fulfilments. For example, in some there can be a long list of various items of jewellery that one hankers for or gets. (No. 2. 'Fly!...Fly, you Crane!'; No.3. 'A Child of Thirty Days she is...'; No.4. 'O Little One, a Comely Girl, of Beaming Smile!'; No.9. 'Swing Ho, Dear Child...Swing!'). The women who sing may not have them at all. They are obviously too poor to own them. But they have seen them, and surely wish to have them. The jewels that get listed in the poem go into a kind of wish-fulfilment of those who sing it, - a sort of Barmecide feast or window-shopping. There are songs which recount the name of vegetables, flowers, fish and animals which merely bring in some familiar details of the quotidian world when women's backs are bent.

Since the songs are sung by women, mostly when only women are around, the situation enables them indulge in a measure of freedom of expression and transferred images. For example, constructing and expressing sexual images can be a part of certain work songs. In No.1 "Handsome Tawny Red Bull", which ostensibly speaks of a handsome, virile bull, there

are suggestions of an aggressive, irresistible male presence and the images alternate between the bull and the man. While the handsome tawny red bull is requested 'not to feed on the harvest of the poor', not to break the 'rickety fences of the poor', not to lurk behind bushes and thickets or prowl in lanes and winding paths, but 'stick to the pathway of the fields' the *double entendre* cannot be missed. The sexual imagery becomes all the more explicit when, at the end of the song, one of the bigger, apparently aggressive women pounces on a young woman among them and grabs her to a celebratory mirth and laughter. There is no lesbian suggestion here, but a transferred sexual imagery. Often the landlord, in his supervisory capacity would be watching the scene, which adds to the authenticity of the suggested imagery. There are other songs which are more plainly romantic. For example, in No.10. 'Come My Lord! Come to Me!' and No.11. 'As I was going along the field...' there are clearer expressions of romantic inclinations, if not portrayals. In No. 13. 'Who is inside the house, dear Lady?' there is a little funny picture of an attempted sexual escapade ending in frustration.

The rural world, in fact, can offer playful images of transgressions and defiance of prudery. For instance, in No. 6. 'Picket Fence! Who had Lowered it?' speaks of the fences which men have erected, which, in turn, they habitually lower for pandering to their passions. A prostitute is made for the use of men whose loins are in flame, but they yet determine of prose of morality in society. In No. 14. 'Which Car Festival do you Like?' the transgressions are built into the more pronounced institution of collective religiosity. Car Festivals are what people go to participate in the communal worship and celebration of temple-centred gods. They take place all over the region. But while raising the question, which of them you like best, the explanation given invariably slides from the sacred to the profane: 'There we touched sacred thread of the lords! There we touched bodies of harlots many.' This is no rejection of gods or Car Festivals, but the play of the mundane in what is known to be sacred. Champions of religiosity and knightly protectors of religion may decry such blasphemes, but people are playful and gods are more tolerant.

Drinking toddy or arrack has always been part of the village life. Yet the villagers were aware of the blight that drinking can bring. The narration of the evils of drinking in two *Kabitas* has a strategy which does not preclude humour. In No. 12. 'Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!' the loud proclamation which the man makes is that he would, come what may, drink! The poem lists the evil consequences of drinking, compulsive nature of the drinker, who keeps promising that he would drink anyway! The strategy of the poem is different from what a famous nationalist song did by admonishing people not to drink. Here the drunkard defiantly insists on drinking, while yet listing the evils of drinking. But the message of either is the same. In No. 17. 'Get up...Sit up... O Dooja Sir!' a habitual drunkard wouldn't get up or sit up until somebody takes away his wife! He wouldn't care for smaller losses or lesser calamities! Somehow, we get a feeling that folklore has retained more earthy humour about sex, religion, drinking and many ordinary business of life than what the starchy writers would write. And yet, we can fathom streaks of pain and anguish in such earthy humour. They say one should learn to laugh so that one can avoid crying. Apparently, the women who sing these songs, had learnt this difficult art.

Apart from these songs that convey certain cryptic or suggested sentiments, there are others with short story-lines or episodes thereof. We may mention here Tulu work songs like "Work! Work Only!" (No.7) and "Triumphant Buffalo, who moved up the finishing line!" (No.18). In No.7 we get an interesting reference to the landlord sending his bondsman to some place up the ghats to procure women workers to work in his fields. It gives fascinating insights into the character of the bondsman, who was not unwilling to behave like a veritable landlord with poor women and even pawn them to get his pot of toddy and or supply of betel nuts. The poem throws light on the character of the landlord, imperious and generous by turn, who would impregnate his wife when he got angry with his workers! It provides details of agriculture, like the operations involved in it, irrigating the field, tending the cattle which service the farmer. The other one (No.18) highlights the obsessive passion of the landlord for the buffaloes trained for

prestigious races, the ways in which the prestige of the landlord is linked to the success of the buffaloes. The affection with which he treats his buffaloes has a parallel with the affection with he is treated by his wife. Both get their baths as elaborately and as lovingly! It has considerable details on *Kambala*, including the import of racing buffaloes, the excitement over preparing for the race, the way the race is held, and how the victory is celebrated. It is not just a rural sport but a statement of who has greater prestige in the land-owning society, which, in turn, defines the rituals that go into the holding of the buffalo-race. It is a relatively long *Kabita*, and has a claim to be a kind of manual of *Kambala* in Tulunadu. However, with the exit of landlordism and consecration of capitalist money power, *Kambala* has undergone definitive changes in the recent years.

Sometimes work songs can give us funny details of a rural world. In "Vultures are Flying...Big Vultures are flying! (No.5) we have fascinating contrast between hopes and realities. With what hopes are vultures flying? There is always a hope that some big carcass is there on offer. Hopes are many, but in the end the vulture ends up getting a little carcass of a crow! In our struggle for existence we hope to get big prizes, but often have to make do with just small consolations.

Another work song which fascinates us in terms of its message is "You are Leaving now... When will you be back?" (No.22) It unveils the Tulu notion of the possible as against the impossible. To say that "I would never return", the strategy is to say that he would return only when impossible things become possible; and many fascinating images are thrown up, like when "cat grows its horns," "barren cow begets a calf," "skink turns out to be a scribe," "lizard learns to read," or when "stooping old woman has her menarche." Such metaphors are used when the end of the world is predicted in Tulu folklore. Whereas our religions promise a sure end to this creation, the Tulu people deny it altogether, playfully telling us that it would happen only when impossible things happen! This world view of the Tuluvas is an affirmation of the reality at hand as against the fear of the apocalypse which would otherwise benumb them.

We have included in this collection a few lullabies. They are not, and they are not expected to be, anything profound. But they do carry some fascinating introductions to the ways of animals or parodies on the ways of children. They also carry some moral teachings which deserve to reach the children as they grow up. Though lullabies are meant for children, they are constructed by and are reflective of the mind of the elders who bring them up.

Another category of folksongs we have chosen here is dance songs, - twenty-two of them, in fact. If the *Kabitas* or work songs are largely sung by women, mostly within agrarian contexts, the dance songs belong to the domain of the dalit communities such as Nalike, Mugera and Mansa. Some are sung within the contexts of certain rituals and dances that are meant to chase away 'evil' or inauspiciousness. "The Song of *Āṭi Kaleñja*" and "The Song of *Karaṅgōlu*" belong to this category. They are sung when *Āṭi Kaleñja* or *Karaṅgōlu* go around, putting on a prescribed attire, singing the song to the accompaniment of drum, visiting houses to expel inauspiciousness. Though they have such noble mission, they actually end up begging for little favours or gifts, which are not easy in coming. Though for example, *Karaṅgōlu* keeps wishing the landlord, "May you prosper! May you prosper!", when he asks for a winnow-full of paddy, "the landlord and his mistress muttered a grunt." The one begs knows that

> "If we are to tell all our tales in full
> We may have to tell them till the dawn!"

And yet one keeps begging, and keeps saying, "May you prosper! May you prosper!" The poor have the power and duty to wish the rich landlords well, and yet remain poor! That apart, the power of these communities to chase away inauspiciousness is linked to the fact that they were the original inhabitants of the land and hence dispossessed. Their power to remove the inauspiciousness that may befall the land is a gesture of forgiveness for the loss they had suffered. For, forgiveness itself can be a polite and sublimated act of protest!

The dance songs which appear in this anthology are also community-

based songs, particularly of Mugera and Mansa, mostly sung to the accompaniment of *duḍi* or a sleek little drum. However, the *Nalike* community, whose women sing the songs of Mādira and Chennu, uses *tembare,* another variety of drum. The dance songs have mostly identified themselves with *duḍi* songs. The word is suggestive of toil, and they believe that their drum 'talks' when beaten. It is likened to their heart-beat. The sound of *duḍi*, though meant to accompany their dance, conveys an undefined poignancy, affirming poet Shelley's sigh that "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought."

Many of the dance songs are centred on women and they carry female voices. 'The Song of Mādira' (No. 34), 'The Song of Kanyāpu' (No. 36), 'The Song of Chennu' (No. 38), 'The Song of Charipadpu Chōmakka' (No. 39), 'The Song of Thāli' (No. 40), 'Our Lady Darane' (No.41), 'The Song of Bairi' (No.42), 'The Song of Kunhakka' (No.43), 'The Song of Koragu' (No.48), 'The Song of Bride Charming' (No.49) and 'The Song of Gaaṇathimmu' (No. 50) can be taken as examples of this kind, although they have different messages to convey. A girl is charming and compellingly alluring, but there lies also the danger. As 'The Song of Mādira' says,

> "Charming girls are coquettish and vain, Mādira
> Under sweet mango tree stones aplenty are strewn
> Yet enchanted was Chenna by the girl so charming
> Even as cock was drawn to peck at paddy when spread"

In 'Our Lady Darane' the danger is more explicit and cruelly operative. When Darane was pounding paddy,

> Then come landlords two, our lady Darane...
> One comes from one side, our lady Darane...
> Another from another side, our lady Darane...
> Wink they at each other, our lady Darane..
>
> Pull her they to hut so old, our lady Darane...
> Share they her well, our lady Darane...

Make her lie prone, do our lords, our lady Darane...
Pound her well turn by turn, our lady Darane...
She writhed and sighed at every turn, our lady Darane

The girl becomes pregnant and unable to bear the shame, she apparently committed suicide, or as the Tulu folklore loves to state, she was "gathered to her ancestors" or became a *Bhūta.*

Another image which appears frequently in the dance songs is that of poverty, which forces women to beg and beg from people who are reluctant to give. 'The Song of Chennu' tells us how Chennu begs for salt and chillies, and when the Mistress refuses, Chennu asks for at least the lees of the salt and dry stalks of chillies. However, the Mistress is not without talent for kind inquiries about Chennu's infant child and advices about the ways of looking after it.

"The child is crying, Chennu, as a bird is singing
Suckle it well, Chennu, give it to play a coconut shell
If the left breast is in trickle, Chennu, suckle it with the right
If the right breast is in trickle, Chennu, suckle it with the left"

She asks her who is looking after the child when Chennu was here, doing rounds of begging. Chennu replies that a Tom Cat and a Black Dog are doing the duty of guarding the child. The Mistress asks Chennu,

"Won't the dog bite it, Chennu, and won't the cat scratch?"

But Chennu replies,

"The dog has sense, my Mistress, and the cat is kind!"

The sarcasm in Chennu's reply is hard to miss. Yet, in spite of the Mistress who is ungenerous, Chennu wishes everyone well:

"If the evil is of the dog, let ashes wash it away!
If the evil is of the cat, let milk wash it away!
If the evil is of the cattle, let grass wash it away!
If the evil is of humans, beyond the sea it be driven away!"

Some of the songs tell us about the hankerings of women, some of them quotidian and others under certain circumstances. For example, "The Song of Charipadpu Chōmakka" (No. 39) and "The Song of Thāli" (No. 40) are suffused with female hankerings within the framework of toil and struggle, while "The Song of Bairi" unveils the nostalgic yearnings of a widow, who found many a romantic experience while yet indigent when her husband was alive. She felt she had everything, - the vermilion dot on her forehead, sarees and blouses and petticoats and loincloths to wear, toddy to drink, - when her husband lived; but now she is left with nothing except the acknowledged widowhood. There are songs which bring out domesticity of female lives like "Looking for a Bride" (No. 44), the thrill and anxieties of finding a bride for the son. For the parents who have to give away their daughter in marriage, the thrill and anxieties are no less, but they are resolved by promises and hopes that all would be well. After all, that is what sustains all arranged marriages in our society.

There are songs which highlight the vocations to which people are tied. "The Song of Gāṇathimmu" (No. 50) and "The Song of the Plough-maker" (No. 51) belong to this category. The former is about the wife of an oil-presser and the latter of the maker of the plough. The wife of the oil-presser is as loyal to her husband and as industrious as the cattle he owns, and the plough-maker, who does not do anything except making the plough, however, is willing to beat his ploughshare into sword and go forth into the battlefield.

"The One who shakes off Red Ants" (No. 52) brings out the foraging lives that the forest-dwellers lead, but the song and the dance offer ample scope for miming the predicament of people who collect Red Ants and their eggs for food. The comicality that is portrayed in the dance song is, at the same time suggestive of the wretched poverty that leads them to the ant-hive. The dance songs also recount the buffalo-race which the landlords sponsor in Tulunadu. After all, the dalit bondsmen participate in it in a big way, as trainers and servants. Their ownership of the race-buffaloes is sentimental rather than real. We have included in the anthology two songs

related to hunts which these communities are part of, as for example, "The Song of Tiger and Cow" (No. 45) and "The Song of Tiger and Boar" (No. 46). These dance songs are available for enactments too, and they are clearly male-centred.

We have given the title, *When Moonlight is very Hot* to this anthology. It is drawn from a phrase which recurs in one of the poems, "Let us go dear! To holy Kaveri Spring!" (No. 24). The title encapsulates both the ambience and mood of the work songs and the dance songs, centred on women. Her nature is known to be soft; she is kind to the world, like moonlight; but she carries within her many burning memories of injuries and wrongs. The ambience in which songs are sung is outwardly pleasant; some of the dances are preferably performed literally in the moonlight. They have mirth and jollity about them. But beneath the songs and dance, there is pain that is painfully held down. But true emotions occasionally surface, in spite of attempts to hold them back, - sometimes unwittingly as it were and sometimes as catharsis, like the sombre tune of *duḍi* or *tembare* that accompany the dance songs. Moonlight and feeling hot there is an experienced contradiction. Poets assure us that lovers go through it. Here others too seem to experience it. What one needs is the sensibility to capture it. The voices to which these folksongs turn their antennae are the voices of toiling workers and women in the rural world, and these voices deserve to be heard to understand our culture. We are used to imagining our culture as timeless and glorious and we are quick to equate it with the spectacular. We may do well to remember that culture is all about how we have lived and how we live in the society we have created. It has its glories and it has its sad negations too. We revel in the masks we carry but miss the message behind them.

While selecting these work songs or *kabitas* and dance songs we have gone to different sources which we have tapped from. Since they are not written by any author but sung in certain contexts, they have different renderings, which are available. We have gone to them and we had to select them from out of different renderings and recordings. Sometimes

when we detected some incongruities in some of them, we had to steer clear of them and trust some other. This does not do violence to the song but merely erases some of the apparent oddities that might have entered into the renderings of the singer or the work of the recorder. As translators we had to make the selections with caution and edit them whenever necessary. However, we have duly acknowledged the source from which we have made the selection. Sometimes, we have inserted the refrains where there are none, because we wanted the song to fit into the context. This, however, in no way deviates from the content of the song. In some cases we have avoided certain repetitions when we thought they are overwrought. After all, the repetitions are the result of the singer's freedom, and we have clipped it when reducing it to print. Our purpose is to give a meaningful text in print, since the reader cannot go to its meaning in the context of actual singing.

We have translated the poems into English with all the fidelity that our abilities allow. Translating words freighted with specific cultural ethos can be a daunting task. We have therefore retained some Tulu words and explained them in foot-notes, which should hopefully serve the purpose of a cultural glossary. However, we cannot promise that the Tulu diction and syntax are dutifully retained in translation. Our fear is that such an act of fierce fidelity would make no sense in English. We have done this translation keeping in mind that this translation would reach the hands of English readers, and we have done our best to ensure that this anthology does not repel them. We had earlier translated modern Tulu poems into English and published them as *Ladle in a Golden Bowl*. We have also translated Tulu folktales in an anthology, *The Rain Boy*, and a Tulu novel, *Mittabail Yamunakka: A Tale of a Landlord's House* by D.K. Chowta, which are in press. That experience has emboldened us to translate Tulu *Kabitas* and Dance Songs into English. We hope that our efforts will give Tulu cultural world a wider audience.

We have dipped our hands into many sources. *Tulu Janapada Sahitya* by B.A. Viveka Rai (1985), *Mugēraru- Janāṅga, Jānapada Adhyayana*

by Abhayakumar (1992), *Nalike Janāṅgada Kuṇitagaḷu- Ondu Adhyayana* by Palthadi Ramakrishna Achar (1995), *Mugērara duḍi Kuṇitagaḷu- Swarupa mattu Samskriti* by Koira N. Balepuni (2010), *Belthangadi Parisarada Mērara Kuṇitagaḷu* unpublished M.Phil dissertation, Mangalore University by Yadupathi Gowda, D (1990), *Tuḷu Janapada Kāvyagalalli- Iha-Para Lōka Driśṭi,* Rajashri (2008), *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu* by B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashri (1996), *Nāti* by Roopakala Alva (1992), *Samskriti Siri* by K. Chinnappa Gowda (2003), personal collections from Aerya Laxminarayana Alva and Aruna Kumar S.R. We thank them immensely.

We are indebted to persons who have been prodding us to our labours. Aerya Laxminarayana Alva, a nonagenarian Tulu cultural ambassador of the region, was always reminding us of our duty to Tulu. B. A. Viveka Rai and Abhayakumar have helped us in fixing the texts of the songs and were always available to us for discussions on the matter. We thank them sincerely.

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Karnataka Tulu Sahitya Academy has come forward to publish this work. Its President, Sri A.C. Bhandari has unstintingly extended the patronage of the Academy and ensured that the anthology is published promptly. The Registrar of the Academy, Sri Chandrahasa Rai, has always been generous in his advice and help. We thank them most sincerely.

Kallur Nagesh has printed the book with his wonted promptness and elegance. He and his team in Aakrithi Prints are entitled to our appreciation and thanks.

Assaigoli
15th February 2018

B. Surendra Rao
K. Chinnappa Gowda

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Work Songs

1. Handsome Tawny Red Bull

Come hither! Dear, handsome Tawny Red Bull!
Come hither! Dear, handsome Tawny Red Bull!

Where were you born, handsome Tawny Red Bull?
Born up the ghats, this handsome Tawny Red Bull.
Where up the ghats, handsome Tawny Red Bull?
Born in a stony cavern, this handsome Tawny Red Bull.
Which cow begot this son, this handsome Tawny Red Bull?
Son of that tawny cow, this handsome Tawny Red Bull[1]
He grunts at every step he takes, this handsome Tawny Red Bull
You of lovely four legs, handsome Tawny Red Bull
Of white stripes on the forehead, handsome Tawny Red Bull
Of white glowing hairs on the tail, handsome Tawny Red Bull
Of colourful patches under thine belly, handsome Tawny Red Bull
And as colourful patches on four legs, handsome Tawny Red Bull
He has to have green grass of high hills, handsome Tawny Red Bull
He drinks waters pellucid of green hills, handsome Tawny Red Bull
Out of stone-tray he has eaten his cooked food, handsome Tawny Red Bull
Drank his water from the stony rivulet, handsome Tawny Red Bull
Bent he was to come down from the ghats, handsome Tawny Red Bull
Came he down from up the ghats, this handsome Tawny Red Bull

---

[1] In Tulu folksongs and tales 'tawny-coloured cow' and 'tawny red bull' have a familiar presence. The colour is considered auspicious for the cow. 'Tawny-coloured cow' is *'Kabulti petta'* in Tulu, which answers to *'Kapile'* in Kannada. 'Tawny Red Bull' therefore has not only great pedigree, but also is considered handsome and sexually virile and hence irresistibly desirable!

He grunts at every step he takes, this handsome Tawny Red Bull
But feed not on the harvest of the poor, handsome Tawny Red Bull
Break not the rickety fences of the poor, handsome Tawny Red Bull
Lurking he is behind bushes and thickets, handsome Tawny Red Bull
Prowl does he in lanes and winding paths, handsome Tawny Red Bull
But, hey, stick to the pathway of the fields, handsome Tawny Red Bull
He grunts at every step he takes, this handsome Tawny Red Bull
Comely cows are here for you, you handsome Tawny Red Bull
Come hither! Dear, handsome Tawny Red Bull!
Young calves in heat are here too, handsome Tawny Red Bull
He grunts at every step he takes, this handsome Tawny Red Bull
Come hither! Dear, handsome Tawny Red Bull!
Come hither! Dear, handsome Tawny Red Bull!

Tulu Original: "Dūji Kemmaire" in *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu,* Edited with Kannada Translation by B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashree, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Tulu Peetha, Mangalore University, 1996.

2. Fly!... Fly, you Crane!

Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?[2]
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Adorn thy hands with bangles, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning them?
Adorn thy finger with ring, Crane!
What else do you do here without adorning it?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What else do you do here without flying?

Adorn thy toes with silver ring, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning them?
Adorn thy feet with golden chain, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning them?
Adorn thy feet with silver chain, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning them?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What else do you do here without flying?

Adorn thy waist with jewelled waistband, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning it?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Adorn thy nostril with a glittering ring, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning it?
Adorn thy nose with a shining stud, Crane!
What else do you do here without adorning it?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

---

[2] There is another version of the song which asks the question differently: "What am I to do without flying?" This question and the answers that follow do not quite gel. Hence we have chosen the version that you find here.

Adorn thy ears with golden studs, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning them?
Adorn thy ears with ear-rings, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning them?
Adorn thy ears with chained rings, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning them?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Adorn thy neck with jasmine-chain, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning it?
Adorn thy neck with chain like beaten-rice, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning it?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Comb thy hair well, dear Crane! What do you do here without combing it?
Plait thy hair nicely, Crane! What do you do here without plaiting it?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Adorn thy hair with a golden clip, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning it?
Adorn thy hair with a dazzling ribbon, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning it?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Adorn thy hair by parting it well, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning it?
Adorn thy hair with jasmine flowers, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning it?
Adorn thy hair with screw-pine flower, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning it?
Adorn thy braid with flower-shaped jewel, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning it?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?
Put on thy blouse, dear Crane! What do you do here without putting it on?
Put on thy skirt, dear Crane! What do you do here without putting it on?

Wear thy silk saree, dear Crane! What do you do without wearing it?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Hold thy hanky in your hand, Crane!
What do you do here without holding it?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Adorn thy forehead with vermilion dot, Crane!
What do you do without adorning it?
Adorn thy eyes with attractive black, Crane!
What do you do here without adorning them?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Hold the umbrella in thy hands, Crane!
What do you do here without holding it?
Carry thy box in your hands, Crane!
What do you do here without carrying it?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do without flying?

Put on thy footwear quickly, dear Crane!
What do you do here without wearing them?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Tell us, you will go and return soon, Crane!
What do you do here without telling us?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Cross I will the colourful forest yonder, before I take wings and fly away!

Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?
Fly!... Fly, you Crane in the sky! What do you do here without flying?

Tulu Original: "Rāvō Rāvu Koruṅgō, Rāvandēne Dānuba" in *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu,* Edited with Kannada Translation by B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashree, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Tulu Peetha, Mangalore University, 1996.

3. A Child of Thirty Days She is...

A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!

A child of thirty days she is; she asked for bangles already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for finger-rings already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!

A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a golden neck-chain already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!

A child of thirty days she is; she asked for ear-studs already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for jewelled ear-hangings already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for ear-rings already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!

A child of thirty days she is; she asked for face powder already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for face snow already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!

A child of thirty days she is; she asked for eye-black already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!

A child of thirty days she is; she asked for coloured ribbon already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for flowers to adorn already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for hair-clips already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!

A child of thirty days she is; she asked for anklet-chains already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for footwear already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!

A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a chain of gold-coins already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a golden necklace already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for golden rope-chain already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!

A child of thirty days she is; she asked for wrist-watch already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for umbrella colourful already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a painted box already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!

A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!
A child of thirty days she is; she asked for a skirt already!

Tulu Original: "Muppo Dinotta Bālē Ālu Pāḍyara Laṅga Kēṇḍālē" in *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu,* Edited with Kannada Translation by B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashree, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Tulu Peetha, Mangalore University, 1996.

4. O Little One, a Comely Girl, of Beaming Smile!

O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven![3]
To her they gave a finger-ring of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave bangles, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave a chain of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave toe-rings, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

---

[3] Seven seems to be a favourite or even a magical number in Tulu folk imaginings. Hence, seven brothers to one sister cannot be too many! They also present her with many items of jewel, 'of seven weights of gold!' The pervading fascination for 'seven' in Tulu folklore extends to 'seven storeys of the palace' 'seven seas and beyond' 'seven hills and beyond' 'seven worlds', 'serpent of seven hoods', 'begging in seven different households', 'seven days and seven nights', not to speak of 'seven children'.

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave ear-studs, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave jewelled hangings, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave a hair-pendant, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave a nostril-ring, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave a wheel-strung chain, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave wheat-shaped chain, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave a jingling anklet, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave a hair-clip, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave seven ribbons of the dazzling colour of gold!
O little one, a beautiful girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave jasmine flowers, of seven rolls indeed!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave flowers of reddish hue, of seven garlands indeed!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave jewels for plaits, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave jewels to her parted hair, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

To the little girl, the comely one, brothers are seven!
To her they gave screw-pine flower, of seven weights of gold!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!
O little one, a comely girl! Of beaming smile!

Tulu Original: "Elyālu Elya Bāle Telikēda Mōnedālē" in *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu*, Edited with Kannada Translation by B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashree, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Tulu Peetha, Mangalore University, 1996.

5. Vultures are Flying...Big Vultures are Flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?[4]

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a boar, these vultures are flying!
Seeing a big carcass of a boar, these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a stag these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a stag these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?

---

[4] In villages the sight of vultures flying is seen as a clue to some cow or cattle falling prey to a tiger or leopard. Here in this song it is not only indicated but is parodied too.

Seeing the carcass of a tiger these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a tiger these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a deer these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a deer these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a squirrel these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a squirrel these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a rabbit these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a rabbit these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?

Seeing the carcass of a turtle these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a turtle these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a bear these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a bear these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of an elephant these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of an elephant these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a bison these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a bison these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?

Seeing the carcass of a lion these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a lion these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a mongoose these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a mongoose these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a peacock these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a peacock these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a black monkey these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a black monkey these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?

Seeing the carcass of a buffalo these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a buffalo these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a dog these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a dog these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing which big carcass are these vultures flying?
Seeing the carcass of a crow these vultures are flying!
Seeing the big carcass of a crow these vultures are flying!

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Seeing which carcass are these vultures flying?

Vultures are flying...Look, big vultures are flying!
Up in the hills and quarries, look, vultures are flying!

Tulu Original: "Karu Rāyeru Malla Karu Rāyeru" in *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu*, Edited with Kannada Translation by B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashree, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Tulu Peetha, Mangalore University, 1996.

6. Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Picket Fence! Who had lowered you?

Who had raised the lowered fence?
Who then had lowered the fence raised?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot hair-oil to smear?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot comb to set her hair?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot a bunch of jasmine flowers?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?

Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?
Who gave the harlot champak flower?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot red, red rose?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot a bunch of areca flowers?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot jewel to adorn her hair?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot screw-pine flower?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot coloured hair-band?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who put the harlot a red-dot on her forehead?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot eye-black to adorn?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot face-powder to adorn?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot nose-stud of gold?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot a nose-ring to adorn?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot ear-stud of gold?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot ear-jewel clipped to her hair?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who offered the harlot toddy to drink?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Who gave the harlot betel-nuts to chew?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Picket Fence! Who had lowered it?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?
Who then had raised the lowered fence?
Virile youths of lower fields, didn't they?

Tulu Original: "Bēli Bēlyappa Jaggayinēriyā?" in *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu*, Edited with Kannada Translation by B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashree, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Tulu Peetha, Mangalore University, 1996.

7. Work! Work Only...!

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Landlord of ours
Left his home so grand
Went to clear the grass
Of six-mura field
To sow the seeds
On three-mura field[5]

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

The seeds sown once
Birds pecked them away
The seedlings grown there again
Wild boars feasted on so well

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

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[5] One *mura* (*muḍi*) is a round hay-bundle of rice or paddy measuring 42 *seers* or 3 *kaḷases*, equivalent of 39 kilograms. Reference to six or three *mura* paddy field is the extent of the paddy field in which six or three *muras* of paddy could be sown.

[6] Two varieties of rice which have special fragrance and hence very much sought after.

Seeds that were sown again
Were *gandhasāle* and *jīrasāle*[6]
They flourished well indeed
Of grace of sharp and slim needle!
They sprouted well, and really well!

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

The landlord of ours
Went to the field
Saw the seedlings,
Saw their re-planting lagging
Saw some workers short
To secure their growth well,
While the others' were done!

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

When it was so
Came our bondsman,
Our bondsman Kalāla

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Where are you heading
Kalāla, our bondsman?
To the field yonder
I am heading to, sir!

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!
Maids replant there,
Crooning 'Work only!'
To see them there
To hear them there, I go!

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Would you join me,
Me in the field instead?
Asked the landlord
Our landlord, sir

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Yes sir, he said
And nodded our bondsman.
If so, said our lord,
Go up the ghats
To collect workers many

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

They wouldn't come here
If I tell them to
Said our bondsman

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

At that time
Said our landlord,
Go out there
Cut down areca spathe

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Ask for yesterday's rice
From the lady of the house,
Said landlord of ours

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

To the garden bondsman went
Cut down spathe so young
And he asked for
Yesterday's rice
From the lady of the house

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Then was he served
Pot-full of yesterday's rice,
Pickle out of the wooden trough,
A jar of butter-milk
Served our lady of the house

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Eating them all
Came back our bondsman
Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Then gave him,
Our landlord
His own spathe-cap
Made so well
He gave our bondsman

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Landlord gave him
White parasol, his own

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Worn out sandals
Our landlord used
The clothes all faded
Our landlord had worn
He gave them to Kalāla

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

His swagger-cane too
He gave it to Kalāla

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Now you go,
Go up the ghats
And come back
With workers!

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

From there
He left
From down at *Siri Lōka*
To *Miri Lōka* above[7]
Up above the ghats

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

He went up, he saw
Many a *Baira* woman
Crooning songs
Grinding finger-millet
Singing songs auspicious
Such women he saw

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

---

[7] In Tulu folk imagination there are many wonderful worlds. Our own world is no less wonderful. It is *Siri Lōka*, the 'World Prosperous'. Up above there is *Miri Lōka*, the 'World Dazzling'.

Then he asked,
Kalâla, our bondsman:
To my landlord's work
To work in his fields
To do his menial work
Would you come with me?

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

To your landlord's work
For a few days' work
To work in his field
To do his menial work
We would not go with you!

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Our men-folk
Are away
For manual work
For good wages
Of rupees thirty

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

When they return
We should ready
Hot water for bath
And cook their food
We would not go!

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!
Then did our bondsman
Sharpen his moustache red
His reddish eyes did glower
Brandished he his swagger-stick

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Looking at him they begged
"Beat us not, you bondsman!
We will come,
Come soon we will"
Tying up their dishevelled hair
Set out those women soon

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Thus our bondsman
Collected workers,
Thus did our Kalāla

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Thirty women black
And thirty women fair,
Collected he, our bondsman

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

As he climbed up
One hill
As he came down
Another hill
Our bondsman
Felt very thirsty
Our bondsman
Felt very hungry

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

He then hurried
To Baidya's toddy-shop[8]
Pledged a woman he had brought
And drank frothing grog
Two measures full!

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

As our bondsman
Came down further
Not having eaten betel-nut
He felt like
Going really mad

---

[8] *Baidya* is one of the appellations to a numerically strong Tulu community. It is traditionally associated with toddy-tapping. But there are in it practitioners of folk medicine, and hence they are called *Baidyas* (*Baidyeru* in Tulu). Among them are priests in the shrines of the folk deities, and that has given them the name *Pūjāris*. They are also called *Biruvas* (*Biruveru* in Tulu) because they were known to be hunters and also recruited as archers in Tuluva armies.

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

He then hurried
To Setti's shop[9]
Pledged a woman he brought
Bought his betel-nut
And chewed it well
Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Reached he, his place
Our bondsman
And landlord saw
What he had brought
And counted them all

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

As he counted he found
One woman black short
One woman fair less

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Landlord then
Asked the bondsman
What did he do with

---

[9] *Seṭṭi* is a derivative of 'Śrēṣṭi', a quintessential merchant.

Two women he had brought
Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Hasten did our landlord
To tie him up and beat him

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

I beg you, my lord!
Have mercy, my lord!
As I came
Down a hill
Felt I very thirsty

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Felt I hungry
Felt I tired
So pledged I
A woman I brought
And drank my grog

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

As I came down
Came down further
Chewing not the betel-nut
I felt like mad
Felt like going mad

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

So did I pledge
Another woman I brought
In Setti's shop
And chewed my betel-nut

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Angry and hopping
Is our landlord
When he went to the field
He was angry with workers!
When at home was he wild
With the lady of the house!

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Angry and hopping,
He was to make
His lady pregnant!

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

If she gives birth
To a baby girl
She would help her mother
If she gives birth

To a baby boy
He would help his father

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

If a dear daughter
Were to be born
She would wake up
In the morning
To wash the utensils all

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

If a dear son
Were to be born
Would he go
To the paddy-fields
To lower the water-level when more
Or raise its level when less

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

He would shut the water
Flowing to the field next
Coming back
Would he collect
Grass so tender
To feed the calves so dear

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Grass he fed to
His calves so dear
Shovels he kept
He kept in his shed

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Entered he his house
Took out spout-goblet
Of silver auspicious
Took he to the well
His father had dug

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Cross-bar as of sky
Water of deep world below
He drew water vessel-full
With it washed clean
In flint-powder well
His spout-goblet of silver

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

One more pot of water
He drew to wash
His hands and feet
Sprinkled on his face so bright

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

One more pot of water
He drew and filled
His spout-goblet of silver

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Then would he go to
The basil-platform
His father had built
Go round and round it
Thrice over
And pour water to basil plant
Did our dear son

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Palm-full water
He took out to drink,
Drink he did
To cool his body

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Went he inside
Asked his mother
To serve him
Pot-full of yesterday's rice
A bowl-full of curd
That pickle out of the jar
And another mango-pickle too

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Mother served him
Green-grind of vegetables
With flavoured ghee
He ate his rice in milk
To end it in butter-milk

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Coming out, he dusted
The seat in the hall
And sat there in state
To earn the name of the lord

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

But he wouldn't
Talk like a lord
But was generous
To all the poor

Work! Work Only...!
Work! Work Only...!

Tulu Origin: "Ō Bēle" in B.A. Viveka Rai, *Tuḷu Janapada Sāhitya*, Kannada Sahitya Parishat, Bengaluru, 1985

8. Where were you born Squirrel, my Dear?

Where were you born Squirrel, my Dear?
Where were you born Squirrel, my Dear?

Do your *Chai-Chui,* Squirrel, my Dear![10]
Do your *Chai-Chui,* Squirrel, my Dear!

Where were you born Squirrel, my Dear?
Where were you born Squirrel, my Dear?
Born was I in tree-cavity, Squirrel I am
Born was I in tree-cavity, Squirrel I am

What were you born with, Squirrel, my Dear?
What were you born with, Squirrel, my Dear?
With three stripes on my back, Squirrel I am
With three stripes on my back, Squirrel I am

What menu do you like, Squirrel, my Dear?
What menu do you like, Squirrel, my Dear?
Raw mango I do like, Squirrel I am
Raw mango I do like, Squirrel I am

Move away for now, Squirrel, my Dear
Come hither now, Jackal, my Dear!

Where were you born, Jackal, my Dear?
Where were you born, Jackal, my Dear?

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[10] *Chai-Chui* is onomotopoeic representation of squeaking squirrel.

Born in a thicket, Jackal I am
Born in a thicket, Jackal I am

What were you born with, Jackal, my Dear?
What were you born with, Jackal, my Dear?
Born with bushy tail, Jackal I am
Born with bushy tail, Jackal I am

What menu do you like, Jackal, my Dear?
What menu do you like, Jackal, my Dear?
Black hen I do like, Jackal I am
Black hen I do like, Jackal I am

Move away for now, Jackal, my Dear
Come hither now, Serpent, my Dear

Where were you born, Serpent, my Dear?
Where were you born, Serpent, my Dear?
Born in an anthill, Serpent I am
Born in an anthill, Serpent I am

What were you born with, Serpent, my Dear?
What were you born with, Serpent, my Dear?
Born with a hood, Serpent I am
Born with a hood, Serpent I am

What menu do you like, Serpent, my Dear?
What menu do you like, Serpent, my Dear?
Hen's egg I do like, Serpent I am
Hen's egg I do like, Serpent I am

Move away for now, Serpent, my Dear
Come hither now, Tiger, my Dear!

Where were you born, Tiger, my Dear?
Where were you born, Tiger, my Dear?

Born in a stone-cave, Tiger I am
Born in a stone-cave, Tiger I am

What were you born with, Tiger, my Dear?
What were you born with, Tiger, my Dear?
Born with four legs strong, Tiger I am
Born with four legs strong, Tiger I am

What were you born with, Tiger, my Dear?
What were you born with, Tiger, my Dear?
Born with white spot on the forehead, Tiger I am
Born with white spot on the forehead, Tiger I am

What were you born with, Tiger, my Dear?
What were you born with, Tiger, my Dear?
Born with white stripes on the tail, Tiger I am
Born with white stripes on the tail, Tiger I am

What were you born with, Tiger, my Dear?
What were you born with, Tiger, my Dear?
Born with moustache fierce, Tiger I am
Born with moustache fierce, Tiger I am

What menu do you like, Tiger, my Dear?
What menu do you like, Tiger, my Dear?
Black cow I do like, Tiger I am
Black cow I do like, Tiger I am

Tulu Original: "Ī Ōlu Puṭyambe Caṇilaṇṇā" in B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashree, *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu*, SDM Tulu Peetha, Mangalore University, 1996

9. Swing, Ho! Dear Child...! Swing...

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Up there is a world so dazzling
Here below is a world so rich
From there Īśvara, the Lord of World
Would come down to our world so rich

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Dry land of a thousand *muras* our Īśvara owns[11]
A hundred *muras* of wet land he too has
To the shed where he stores his shovels
Has our Īśvara gone in hurry now!

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

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[11] The folk imagining of Ishwara and Parvati as well-to-do landlord and his wife is both common and interesting. There is a show of great familiarity with gods and, at the same time, they are linked to the agrarian experience of the region. Gods are capable of miracles and at the same time they are one of the folk-world. Ishwara figures here as landlord, but elsewhere, as in *Pañjurli* epic he is a hunter, harking back to the story of the hunter's disguise Śiva took to test Arjuna.

Feeds he his fields water so fresh
Īśvara raised its level when it was less
Lowered he its level when it was more
You know our Īśvara, our Lord, haven't you?

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Go to the pond, Īśvara, to wash your hands and feet
Come back soon, Īśvara, our Lord Īśvara!
To wash his hands and face he has gone
Our Īśvara to the pond, our Lord Īśvara!

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

There in the pond to which he went
Saw he a lotus flower, our Lord Īśvara
To catch that lotus flower
He hurriedly went, our Lord Īśvara!

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

As he tried to catch the flower
Did it retreat, our playful flower!
He yet grabbed it, as it came smiling
Haven't you heard of that Lord Īśvara?

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Then would he hurry home, our Lord
Call then he would Pārvati his dear
Asked he if she had her bath
If she had her lunch

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Comb your hair soon, Pārvati
Adorn this flower soon, Pārvati
I should watch you beauty, my dear
Said our Īśvara, our Lord Īśvara!

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Pārvati took the flower happily
Kept it verily in the door sill
Next day placed it again
In big stone box for treasure

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

That day was over for sure
Next day dawned for sure too
I hear the voice of a child, Pārvati!
In palace where there is no child or kin
I do hear the voice of a child, Pārvati!

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

What are you saying, Īśvara my Lord!
We have no children in our palace!
But I hear a child crying, Pārvati dear
I do hear a child crying, Pārvati dear!

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Goes in our Pārvati to the room inside
To light the lamp perpetual
There she saw emerged in grandeur
A girl child on the lotus flower, for sure![12]

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Bring that child to the room outside
Said our Lord, our Īśvara Lord
Saw he the charm of the child
He made for her a waist-string of gold

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

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[12] The birth of this miraculous girl-child was reckoned as miraculous even by gods! The miraculous birth of the girl-child has a resonance with the birth of Siri in a bunch of areca flowers, in another famous epic of that name. The folk imaginings of Tulunadu have conferred Ishwara and Parvati the gift of more children than they were known to have in purāṇas. But this miraculously born girl has very mundane wishes and her parents fulfil them by going through very mundane exercises like going Kudla town (Mangalore) to buy things that the daughter demanded and by visiting goldsmith Krishnayya Achary there to get jewels made!

The little child became a girl so dear
The girl so dear became a woman so fine
Listen dear mother, she said,
I need a saree to wear

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Went they, her parents to Kudla town
Bought they saree to their daughter to wear
She yet kept crying, this daughter so dear
That she surely wanted blouse to wear

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Went they, her parents to Kudla town
Brought they blouse to their daughter to wear
She yet kept crying, this daughter so dear
That she surely wanted ear-stud of gold

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Went they, her parents to Kudla town
Weighed and bought they a measure of gold
Gave it to Krishnayya Achary, the goldsmith of ours
Giving it one heating and two beatings
Surely make a pair of ear-studs of gold

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

She yet kept crying, this daughter so dear
That she surely wanted nose-stud of gold
Went they, her parents to Kudla town
Weighed and bought they a measure of gold
Gave it to Krishnayya Achary, the goldsmith of ours
We need for our daughter a pair of nose-studs
Giving it one heating and two beatings
Surely make a pair of nose-studs of gold

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

She yet kept crying, this daughter so dear
That she surely wanted a necklace of gold
Went they, her parents to Kudla town
Weighed and bought they a measure of gold
Gave it to Krishnayya Achary, the goldsmith of ours
We need for our daughter a necklace of gold
Giving it one heating and two beatings
Surely make for our daughter a necklace of gold

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

She yet kept crying, this daughter so dear
That she surely wanted bangles of gold
Went they, her parents to Kudla town
Weighed and bought they a measure of gold
Gave it to Krishnayya Achary, the goldsmith of ours
We need for our daughter bangles of gold
Giving it one heating and two beatings
Surely make for our daughter bangles of gold

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

She yet kept crying, this daughter so dear
That she surely wanted a cestus of gold
Went they, her parents to Kudla town
Weighed and bought they a measure of gold
Gave it to Krishnayya Achary, the goldsmith of ours
We need for our daughter a cestus of gold
Giving it one heating and two beatings
Surely make for our daughter a cestus of gold

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

She yet kept crying, this daughter so dear
That she surely wanted an anklet of gold
Went they, her parents to Kudla town
Weighed and bought they a measure of gold
Gave it to Krishnayya Achary, the goldsmith of ours
We need for our daughter an anklet of gold
Giving it one heating and two beatings
Surely make for our daughter an anklet of gold

Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!
Swing, Ho! Dear Child! Swing, Ho! Lucky Child!

Tulu Original: 'Ṭruvēle Bāle Bāle Poliyē' in B.A. Viveka Rai, *Tuḷu Janapada Sāhitya,* Kannada Sahitya Parishat, Bengaluru, 1985

10. Come my Lord! Come to Me!

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
Along the jasmine venue come to me!

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
See my flower-adorned hair so lovely!

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
Along the jasmine venue come to me!

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
See my vermilion dot on the forehead

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
Along the jasmine venue come to me!

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
See the glory of my face so charming!

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
Along the jasmine venue come to me!

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
See the colour gorgeous of my blouse

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
Along the jasmine venue come to me!

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
See for yourself the ripples of my saree

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
Along the jasmine venue come to me!

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
Fathom the yearnings of my heart!

Come my Lord! Come to Me!
Along the jasmine venue come to me!

Tulu Original: "Balē Swāmyora Balēyē" A text collected by Aerya Laxminarayana Alva, 'Saketa', Modankapu, Buntwal Taluk, Dakshina Kannada.

11. As I was going along the field....

As I was going along the field
I saw Dugganna Konde coming along

It was all right he was coming
But he did hold my hand very tight!

It was all right he held my hand
But to his mansion he did invite!

It was all right he took me to his mansion
But he made me sit on his swing-cot!

It was all right he made me sit on swing-cot
But he offered me a goblet of milk so sweet!

It was all right he offered me milk so sweet
But he took me to his kitchen too!

It was all right he took me to his kitchen
But he made me handle pots and ladle!

It was all right he made me handle pots and ladle
But he wanted me to live with him, didn't he?

As I was going along the field
I saw Dugganna Konde coming along

Tulu Original: "Mittoñji Boṭṭuḍe Pōṇāga" A text collected by Aerya Laxminarayana Alva, 'Saketa', Modankapu, Buntwal Taluk, Dakshina Kannada.

12. Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Inside the haystack! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Inside every bush! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Inside the haystack! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

In the manure heap! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Selling wife's black-beads, Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

I will give up not! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Selling away my cattle! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Selling the seeds I stored! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Selling my house and land! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Selling pots and utensils all! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Selling wife and children! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Even if I fall on the road! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Let dog lick my face! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Selling fields and trees! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Selling coconut or arecanut trees! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Selling wife's jewels! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Selling her saree and blouse! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Drink you I should! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Give up I will not, Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Inside the haystack! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Inside every bush! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!
Damn you Bitch! Arrack Dear!

Tulu Original: "Hāth Lauḍi Gaṅgasaro" in B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashree, *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu*, SDM Tulu Peetha, Mangalore University, 1996

13. Who's inside the House, Dear Lady?

"Who's inside the house, dear lady?
Who's inside the house, dear lady?"

"Who's inside the house, dear lady?"
"Yes, I am inside the house" she said.

"Must you need jaggery and tea powder?"
"Sure, sure I need them both,
But I have nothing to pay for now"

Jaggery and tea powder he gave and said,
"Meet you for sure when I return"

Sold he his wares here and there
Returned he when it was dark,

"Who's inside the house, dear lady?"
"Yes, I am inside the house" she said.

"Can I stay here overnight?" asked he
"Surely not! Not overnight" she said

"The jaggery I gave was surely sweet,
But am I to you so bitter?" he asked

"Yes, I relent, stay you here" she said
Went she inside firewood shed

Gave him a tattered mat of straw
And another tattered rug to cover
Gave him rice gruel stale
Gave him pickles no less stale!

He packed them all, each of them,
Ate them and lay down in the shed

"Mosquitoes are a menace here!
And I get no sleep here" muttered he

Got up he at dead of night
Pushed the door of the house ajar
And groped his way inside

"Damn you, go away" she hissed
"The jaggery I gave was surely sweet,
But am I to you so bitter?" Asked he

By that time her husband woke up,
Seeing invasion in the dark, shouted he,
"Run, you itinerant trader! Run, you blighter!"
Chased he then with a cane in hand!

"Who's inside the house, dear lady?"
"Yes, I am inside the house" She said.

Tulu Original: "Ērappe Illālu" in B.A. Viveka Rai, *Tuḷu Janapada Sāhitya*, Kannada Sahitya Parishat, Bengaluru, 1985

14. Which Car-Festival do you like?

Which car-festival[13] do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Uppinangadi is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which temple car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which temple car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Karaaya is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Naala is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

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[13] Car-festival refers to the temple car festival, when the image of god is taken round with pomp and pageantry.

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Kuthyaar is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the temple car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Ujire is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Dharmasthala is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Subrahmanya is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Puttur is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Vittla is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Kepu is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Ananthadi is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Madhoor is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Among the car-festivals, Badiya
That of our Kadri is the best, for sure!
There we touched sacred thread of the lords,
There we touched bodies of harlots many

Which car-festival do you like, Badiya?
Which car-festival do you like most?

Tulu Original: "Tēruḍu Tēreḍḍeno, O Baḍiya..." in B.A. Viveka Rai, *Tuḷu Janapada Sāhitya,* Kannada Sahitya Parishat, Bengaluru, 1985

15. Fishes take a Wedding Procession

Mackerel the bridegroom, sardine the bride
As they set out for their wedding procession
All the fishes in water are ready to join
Look! They are all eager to join!

Runs our Half-beak fish to blow his horn
A big-bellied fish to beat the big-drum
Another of big moustache swaggers on
The one with a big head had big turban too!

Mackerel the bridegroom, sardine the bride
As they set out for their wedding procession
All the fishes in water are ready to join
Look! They are all eager to join!

Another draws white marks on forehead
A crab crawls its way to join them sure
Another fish wears saree with all its frills
One more puts on eye-black, dear!

Mackerel the bridegroom, sardine the bride
As they set out for their wedding procession
All the fishes in water are ready to join
Look! They are all eager to join!

A girlish fish combs her hair so fine
A pretty one adorns her hair with flowers

A prawn intrepid joins them, dashing on
Another little one comes too, hopping on!

Mackerel the bridegroom, sardine the bride
As they set out for their wedding procession
All the fishes in water are ready to join
Look! They are all eager to join!

Tulu Original: "Mīnuda Dibbaṇo" in B.A. Viveka Rai, *Tuḷu Janapada Sāhitya,* Kannada Sahitya Parishat, Bengaluru, 1985

16. It was over with Mother-in-Law....

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her ear-studs of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her finger-rings of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her bangles of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her a necklace of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her gold chain like coriander beads!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!

That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her a necklace of little coins of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her ear-hangings of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her waist-band of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her screw-pine flower of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her plaited hair a flower of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her plaited hair a tassel of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her anklets of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her toe-rings of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!
That surely our Daughter-in-Law saw
She got made for her ankle-chains of gold!

It was over, it was over with Mother-in-Law,
It was all over with her near the paddy-field!

Tulu Original: "Āvoṇḍērē Māmināru, Āvoṇḍērē ..." in B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashree Ed. *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu,* SDM Tulu Chair, Mangalore University, 1996

17. Get up! Sit Up! O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have made off with your yoke and plough, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have taken away your buffaloes dear, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have taken away your milch cows, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have stolen your dog, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have made off with your coconuts, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have carried away your areca nuts, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have stolen the vegetables grown, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have carried away muras of rice, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have made off with paddy in the barn, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have taken away jewels in the box, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have carried away your children too, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have carried your father asleep, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have made off with your mother too, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Thieves have taken away your dear wife too, O Dooja Sir!

Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!
Get up! Sit up! Look here, O Dooja Sir!

He then woke up and got up! Our Dooja Sir!

Tulu Original: "Lakkuleyē Kulluleyē Dūja Porbulē" Manuscript available with K. Chinnappa Gowda

18. The Buffalo who Triumphantly Moved up the Finishing Line!

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo![14]
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Right at dawn woke up our Daaraambu
Rolled up her bed on which she slept
Water she took in silver goblet with snout
Went our Daaraambu out of the house
And washed her comely face, did Daaraambu.

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Then did she go into inner yard, Daaraambu
Took her vessel of bronze, yes she did,
Took out the silvery scoop, did Daaraambu
Burnish she did, the vessel and the scoop
Burnish she did with ashes, outside and inside

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[14] The context of the poem is Kambula (Kambaḷa) or buffalo-race which is intimately associated with the agrarian culture of Tulunadu. 'Mañjoṭṭi Gōṇa' refers to the victorious buffalo which crosses the finishing line and moves up a slightly elevated field to receive such buffaloes. The owners of race-buffaloes evince keen interest in finding and rearing the buffaloes because victory in buffalo-race is linked to the prestige of the owner, who is invariably the landlord.

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Milk in vessel of bronze she placed on hearth
With leafy broomstick she swept so quick
Inside the house and outside too, our Daaraambu
Cleaned she the kitchen and rooms inside
She cleaned them all, did our Daaraambu

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Picked up the silvery pail, did Daaraambu
Carried the golden vessel, did Daaraambu
The one she burnished with flint-powder white
The other she gave a flamy shine with powder red
Then she cleaned them from inside and outside

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Then did Daaraamu go to the well
Drew the water into the earthen trough besides
Hoisting the pail on waist, our Daaraambu
And carrying water in golden vessel
Hurried she into the yard inside, our Daaraambu

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

The pail of water she placed on a plank inside
The burnished vessel she carried inside

Milk in vessel of bronze she set aside
To place the burnished vessel of gold
On the hearth again, did our Daaraambu

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Washed she rice in water to clean it well
Washed she rice in milk to pick its tiny stones
Such rice she put into a vessel of milk
To place it to boil, so did our Daaraambu

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

She set out make all the curries, our Daaraambu
With coconut scrapes she made a thousand curries
With tamarind juice, she made a hundred curries,
Grinding chillies hot she made five hundred,
Yes, pickles of five hundred kinds, our Daaraambu

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Butter she boiled into ghee, our Daaraambu
Thus did she complete cooking everything
She finished her cooking right in time
Heat she did water to bathe, that too in time

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

At sun-up did get wake up, Alva our lord
He got up and sat up, did our lord
Came out he, Alva our lord
Entered he to the eastern portico, our lord

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Washed he his face and limbs
From the water in the goblet of gold
Cleaned his teeth and face so quick
Asked our Lord then, "Where are you?
Where are you, my Daaraambu?

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

"I plan to go to Subrahmanya Fair[15]
That is my plan, do you know, dear?
Your cooking should be over well in time!"
Said Alva, Alva our Lord

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

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[15] Cattle-fair at Subrahmanya (Kulkunda) at the foot of the Western Ghats always had great significance. From across the ghats cattle were brought there for sale, and people of Tulunadu went to buy them. Buffaloes of the best quality were available there, which could be used for ploughing or for the more prestigious pastime of buffalo-race. *Kanalāye pāḍdana* has considerable details on this import trade in cattle.

"To our handsome silvery buffalo
Should I find a companion right"
Said our Alva to his Daaraambu

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Saying this did our Alva go
To inspect his fields of a thousand muras
Going there did our Alva stare
At the brimming waters in canals

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

He went up too to dry fields high
Women are planting the seedlings yet
Letting out the water to those fields so high
Came home, his palace, our Alva the lord

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

"Where are you, Daaraambu, where are you lost?
I am getting late, you woman!" said he our lord
Bringing the soap and oil in a pot,
Came Daaraambu, hurrying to the spot

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

To the head she poured ghee-mixed oil, Daaraambu
Into the ears oil she dripped to clean them well

Some oil fine and tepid she smeared on his back
To his feet she sprinkled more oil, Daaraambu
Into his nails she put oil so clean, our Daaraambu

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

With oil did she massage Alva, the lord
Out they marched to the bath-room
Daaraambu in the lead, Alva being led
Mixing she a thousand pots of hot water
With cold water from a thousand and one pots
She just made it just warm enough for his bath

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Our Alva got down to his bath, his head and body
Rubbing him with soap-nut, did our Daaraambu
And with soap so very fragrant
Was our good lord Alva made to recline
And was given a right royal bath, did Daaraambu

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Drying up his hair and body clean
Discarding the soiled clothes, wearing the clean ones
Emerged he our Alva to enter his mansion

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

From there he came to basil platform
Pressing together his fingers ten
He prayed, prayed Alva, our Lord

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Seeing the East put he his Sun-mark
Seeing the West put he his Moon-dot
Saluted the God, yes, our Alva saluted the God
Watering he to basil plant so holy
Went he, our Alva to his dining hall

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

There she had set up plantain-leaf tender
And a wooden plank too to sit on, did Daaraambu
Our Alva sat on the wooden plank
Cleaned the leaf by sprinkling it with water
Into it she served pearly rice, did our Daaraambu

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Of five hundred curries made of butter-milk
Of three hundred curries made of tamarind juice
Served she to her lord, did our Daaraambu
Alva the lord ate his fill and got up in time
Washed his face and hands so clean

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

To the bonded servants they gave, gruel of rice
"Where are you lost? Daaraambu dear?
Get my dress and adornments soon
Into the sack fill all the money and soon
Bring them here and soon!" said our lord

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Soon did she bring sack-full of money
Brought she too his dress and jewels
She did bring bangles of gold and bracelets too
Waistband, ear-rings, neck-chain, bangles of gems
She presented them all in a platter to Alva her lord.

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Our Alva the lord put on his shirt
Tied he his cloth around his waist
And adorned he with his waistband of gold
Ear-rings, neck-chain, bangles and bracelets too
And set out our lord, Alva our lord

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

"Where have you gone, where are you?
Where have you gone, you bonded servants?"
Saying this, Alva began chewing his betel-nuts

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

"To the Subrahmanya cattle-fair, O Daaraambu
To the cattle-fair we are bound.
To our handsome silvery buffalo
To our dear Triumphant Buffalo
I should bring a companion right"
Saying this set out Alva, Alva our lord

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

The sack of money he made his bondsmen carry
They walked long and very long
To reach a big banyan tree
There he rested for a while, our lord
And reached the Subrahmanya cattle-fair

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

There he went to the plateau large
He walked there hither and thither
He walked everywhere in the plateau large
But nowhere did he find a buffalo
To match his handsome silvery buffalo

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Then he prayed God Subrahmanya:
"If only I can find a match for my silvery buffalo
I will offer you twin coconuts and plantains for sure"
So did our Alva make a vow to the God

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Vowing so did our lord walk
Hither and thither on the plateau
Lo! there he found a buffalo to match
His handsome silvery buffalo!

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

He called out his bondsmen and said:
"To our handsome silvery buffalo
To our Triumphant Buffalo will this match?"
Asked if this one would match,
Bondsmen chorused an yes.

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Taking the rope around its horns, our lord,
String it with coins of gold, Alva our lord,
He bought the buffalo, fine and new
And asked his bondsmen to take control

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Bought he too some grass so fresh
From the seller from up the ghats
And the bondsmen took control
Of so handsome Buffalo Triumphant

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Taking the buffalo out of the plateau
They found him angry and defiant
Stiffening his ears and prancing up,
Shook he the ground and bondsmen four!

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Panting for breath, bondsmen struggled so hard,
Tied the buffalo to a tree so hard
Alva our lord went to the temple in hurry
Bathed he in water cool and holy
Offered he to God coconuts he vowed!

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Brought he the gift of sandal paste
Smeared it on the forehead of Buffalo
"Now, the Silvery One, shall we go?" he said
Untied he the rope of the Silvery One
To give it to his bondsmen to take him home

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Moving ahead in triumphant gait, our lord
Reached he his home before soon
Following him did our bondsmen bring
The Silvery Buffalo home very soon

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

As he came, did ready our Daaraambu
Vermilion water and waving lamp
Before was he ushered into the cattle shed
Vermilion water she sprinkled, our Daaraambu
And waved the lamp auspicious now
To chase way the evil-eye, did our Daaraambu

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

They took the new Silvery One to the shed
To join the old Silvery One and tied him there
Came back then our lord, to his mansion dear
Drank he a pot of milk to sate his burning thirst

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

"Listen, Daaraambu, listen to me!
To the pair of silvery buffaloes we have
We need to get all the ornaments made!"
Took he some silver and bronze to the
Goldsmith he knew to have the ornaments made

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

He got them made, for one heating
He got them made for two beatings

He brought them all very soon
Calling out his wife he said,
"Got I to our silvery buffaloes dear
All these ornaments made!"

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Calling out his bondsmen, he said,
"Wash the buffaloes you should,
Oil them well too, before you adorn them
With the ornaments I have brought"

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

"Listen, Lord! A message we have!
A message from the Puttur Guttu,
That there will be a buffalo race famous!
A message there is for us to take our
Pair of Silvery and Triumphant buffaloes!

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

The message she showed Alva, the lord!
Read he the letter, Alva our lord,
Ordered he to wash his buffaloes dear
Bondsmen did what they were told
And brought the buffaloes to the open yard

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Their bodies they massaged with oil
To their necks they put jingling chains,
Anklets so fine and pendants on forehead,
Ear-studs and cloth on their backs embroidered fine
And were fed so much rice boiled in milk

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Then they were held by bondsmen four
Untied they were by Alva our lord
Led they were to the *Jumadi* shrine
They were taken round the *Jumadi* shrine
And made to kneel down before the shrine

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

"Look here! Ours is a household of fame
Ours is a lineage of fame and name
Go you to the race that we take you to
And win there to befit the fame of ours"
So said Alva our lord, patting the buffaloes
And holding fast their colourful bridle

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Taken they were in a procession grand
With horn, pipes, cymbals and band
Taken they were to Kambala field
To Puttur they took, the bondsmen and their lord

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

They fed the buffaloes dear with hay
And horse-gram and oil-cake and all
Ushered they were into the Kambala field
Lined up they were for the race to behold

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

"The pair that runs the fastest gets the pendant gold
The one who squirts the water to the banner up
Gets a necklace of gold! The winners get rice,
Rice-fried, bunch of plantains and coconuts too!"
Declared the people who arrange the race

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Alva our lord went to the starting point,
Stood he beside the buffaloes to race
Readied the restive ones to run ahead,
That Silvery pair of his to run ahead

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

The Silvery pair did run, the pair did run
From one end to another.
Ran ahead the pair as no other did
To win the promised golden pendant

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Ran they did to squirt water to the banner up
To win the promised necklace of gold

As they came they had the grace of a bridegroom!
But they ran at the pace of an eagle in the sky!

Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!
Dear, O Son! Triumphant Buffalo!

Tulu Original: "Mañjoṭṭi Gōṇa", Roopakala Alva, *Nāṭi,* Sandesha Prakashana, Premanagara, Bajjodi, Mangalore, 1992

[There are many versions of this famous Tulu work-song. Some are more elaborate than the others, as they allow a measure of license to the singers of any folksong. But the content of the song remains largely the same. It is about the prestigious race-buffaloes reared and trained by a prominent Tulu landlord, who links the success of his buffaloes in the race with the honour of his household and lineage. The context of the song is women planting the paddy seedlings. But there is a certain taboo associated with this song too. It is not sung when the buffaloes are harnessed to plough the field. It is because there is a legend tagged to this song. It is associated with the fact that while the untouchable bondsmen of the landlord invariably look after and train the race-buffaloes, they are forbidden to enter the race-field or race the buffaloes. Once when an untouchable bondsman insisted on doing it and did it against the wish of the landlord, the buffaloes and bondsman are said to have vanished mysteriously. Apparently, the legend suggests that the guardian spirits of the Tulu ethos meted the defiant bondsman with an appropriate punishment. While the legend unveils a flourishing social prejudice and practice, the taboo associated with it reinforces them too. In the rendering of this folksong collected by Amritha Someshwara, this tragic denouement is given. See, Amritha Someshwara, *Tuḷu Pāḍdana Sampuṭa,* Kannada University, Hampi, 1997.]

19. The Month of Āṭi

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...[16]

The month of Āṭi reminds one of elephant[17]
While in Sōṇa you remember a horse

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

In the month of Āṭi garret is empty
By Sōṇa not even husk of jack-seeds left

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

---

[16] *Ḍenna ḍenana ḍennanā*, is one of the more familiar refrains in Tulu folksongs. Essentially it is onomatopoeic representation of the beatings of the drum which is supposed to accompany the song. Some scholars have wrung more meanings out of it, though, that it is "*Eḍḍeṇṇa, eḍḍeṇṇa..*" meaning, "Good... brother, good... brother..." Drum beat, according to the Tulu folk belief, is said to augur well to those who beat it and those who hear it. Although the song refers to many hardships associated with seasons, there is a refrain that in the end all will be well.

[17] The contrasting images of elephant and horse linked to *Āṭi* and *Sōṇa* months are interesting. Elephant generally moves slowly, much in the same way a difficult month seems to. On the other hand, *Sōṇa* is brighter and more promising. It is also a month in which animals make no secret of their sexual instincts. Horse symbolises visible, enviable sexual prowess. There is a suggestion that such days are wonderful but fleeting.

Āṭi's thunder will break the roof asunder
Sōṇa's thunder breaks the back of our farmer

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

In Āṭi month you will feel hunger acute
There is no rice to eat, but millet gruel you eat

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

Āṭi Kaleñja does visit every home
To chase away evil from every home

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

Āṭi sends the wife to her mother's home[18]
Āṭi brings *Cenne* board from the loft above[19]

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

---

[18] There is a custom in Tulunadu that in the first month of *Āṭi* after marriage, the wife is sent away to her mother's house. This ritual of social sadism is apparently designed to prevent her getting pregnant during that month, which is considered inauspicious.

[19] *Cenne maṇe* is part of an indoor game of Tulunadu. It is a wooden board with two rows of seven cavities each and wild loquorice seeds used as beads. Rainy season is seen as the most suitable time for playing this game. However, invoking a tragic event in the *Siri* epic, there is a taboo that sisters should not play the game.

In Āṭi month you drink satin-wood juice
It carries the power of many a medicine[20]

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

In Āṭi you eat colocasia curry
Surely it destroys poisons in the tummy

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

After Māyi month comes the season of rains
After Āṭi month comes the season bright

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

The Māyi rains coax the weed out
The Āṭi rains make rice grow well

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

The Āṭi rains bring in all flies and insects
The Puṣya rains surely make cats roll over

---

[20] This is again a reference to the prevalent practice in Tulunadu, where before the daybreak on the new moon day of *Āṭi* people are told to go to the satin-wood tree, all naked and hack out its bark with a piece of hard rock. The bark of the tree then is crushed to yield its milky sap, which is then taken as medicine. The belief is that *that* day it acquires miraculous powers of stalling and curing many a disease.

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

In the Magha rains even the stumps do sprout
In Swāthi rains, they say, do pearls too rain

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

If it rains in Uttara, all will be destroyed
If it rains then, there will be nothing to eat

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

Eating jackfruit in Āṭi will bring illness plenty
In rains of Āṭi all roofs surely leak aplenty

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

In Kārthel-Āṭi everything is slushy and dirty
But when Sōṇa is ushered in, all will be bright

Denna denana dennanaa,
Denna denana dennanaa...

Tulu Original: "Āṭi Tiṅgolu", Collected by Geetha, a student of Sri Bhuvanendra College, Karkala, published in the Annual Magazine of the College, *Chandana*, and sent to us by Dr. Arunkumar S.R., Karkala.

[The month of Āṭi is considered by Tuluvas as the most difficult and inauspicious month. It is in the thick of the rainy season; it is a season of scarcity; it allows no meaningful labour. It is a dull and gloomy month. There is a belief that the child conceived in this month will turn out to be a girl! There is a practice of sending away the newly married wife to her mother's place during this month. (We do not know if the first belief has anything to do with the latter practice!) There are many other beliefs and practices associated with the Āṭi which are brought out in the song. The song also highlights the seasons obtaining in Tulunadu and the people's perceptions of them. Although the coastal region of Tulunadu gets plentiful monsoon, and sage Paraśurama is said to have blessed the region and its people freedom from want and pestilence, the popular, particularly poor people's perception of the rainy season is that of scarcity and poverty, when they have to live on jackfruit and other cheaper sources of livelihood. However, hope also keeps them going, which is poor man's biggest and unfailing source of sustenance.]

20. Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige[21]
I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with bangles of gold, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with finger-rings of gold, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning her feet with chains of gold, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with toe-rings of gold, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with a necklace of gold, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with black-beads, has brightened up our Mallige

---

[21] Here Mallige is the name of a woman, perhaps a married one. But Mallige is the Tulu or Kannada name (Sanskrit: Mallika) for jasmine flower. It is the most auspicious and sought-after flower of the region, loved alike by women and men who want to please women, and also deities for every special occasion and festivity.

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with bracelet on arms, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with waist-band of gold, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with red vermilion dot, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with ear-studs of gold, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with ear-hangings, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with a saree beautiful, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with a pendant on forehead, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning a tasseled plait of hair, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Adorning with flowers her plaited hair, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Putting on a pair of footwear, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Flaunting a vanity bag beautiful, has brightened up our Mallige

I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
Holding an umbrella unfurled, has brightened up our Mallige
I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige
I am going, going I am... I surely go, says Mallige

Tulu Original: "Mallige", Collected by Tejaswi Shettigar, a student of Sri Bhuvanendra College, Karkala, published in the Annual Magazine of the College, *Chandana*, and sent to us by Dr. Arunkumar S.R., Karkala.

21. To Bring a Nest for the Black Bird...

To bring a nest for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring the nose-stud for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring the ear-rings for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring the finger-ring for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring the finger-ring for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring black-bead chain for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring the ear-hangings for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring the waist-band for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring the toe-rings for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring silver anklet for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring a silk saree for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring a silk blouse for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring a mirror for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring a comb for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

To bring a nest for the Black Bird, the lord has gone
Will return when sun cools down and breeze wafts on

Tulu Original: "Kariya Pakkida Kārikoṇḍra Pōterañjōvu.." in B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashri, *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu,* SDM Tulu Chair, Mangalore University, 1996

22. You are leaving now...! When will you be back?

You are leaving now, Merchant![22]
When will you be back?
When water trickling across fields needs a bridge
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When creeper of betel leaves gets the girth of a *seer*[23]
I will surely be back

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When a lump butter drowns in butter-milk
I will surely be back!

---

[22] We have no way of knowing why such questions are addressed to a 'merchant' (or it could be king, if we go by another meaning of the word '*Araddēru*'). The series of replies that he will not come back resonates with another Tulu folk world-view about *praḷaya* or the 'end of the world'. There too it is announced that one may see the end of the world if only such impossible conditions are met. It is spectacularly at variance with what many well-known religions tell us about the impending dissolution of the world and what happens next.

[23] *Seer* is a measure, mostly of grains in Tulunadu. It is cylindrical vessel carved out of wood or made of metal. A *seer* of grain weighs a little less than a kilogram.

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When ginger becomes honey itself
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When salt turns into camphor
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When stooping old woman has her menarche
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When black crow glows as white
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When a little bird works at blacksmith's bellow
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When lizard learns to read
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?

When skink turns out to be a scribe
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When the barren cow begets a calf
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When a cat grows its horns
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When wild liquorice seed loses its colour
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When the flint bursts into flowers
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When we can play under tiny *tumbe* plant
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When the stone humped bull starts bellowing
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?
When two mountains merge into one
I will surely be back!

You are leaving now, Merchant!
When will you be back?

Tulu Original: "Ini Pōyi Araddēru..." in B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashri, *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu,* SDM Tulu Chair, Mangalore University, 1996

23. *Tambila* at Ballala's Field

At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*,[24] get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

If you don't have nose-stud, I will get one for you
Come on! Get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

If you don't have ear-studs, I will get them for you
Come on! Get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

If you don't have bangles of gold, I will get them for you
Come on! Get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

If you don't have anklets of silver, I will get them for you
Come on! Get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

---

[24] *Tambila* is an abridged form of ritual propitiation of *daivas* or folk deities and *nāgas* or iconic worship of serpents. It involves ritual offering of rice and coconut along with betel leaves and areca nuts to the folk deities and milk to *nāgas*. A more elaborate propitiation of *daivas* than *tambila* is *Nēma* or *Kōla*, which entails impersonation of the putative spirit and the belief that the *daiva* verily descends from *māya* (the invisible world beyond) to *jōga* (the mundane world which the *daiva* is known to keep watch on). Similarly, there are elaborate and pompous ritual propitiations of *nāga* spirit like *Nāgamaṇḍala* and *Dakkebali*.

If you don't have finger-rings of gold, I will get them for you
Come on! Get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

If you don't have a waist-band of gold, I will get one for you
Come on! Get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

If you don't have a saree of silk, I will get one for you
Come on! Get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

If you don't have a blouse of silk, I will get one for you
Come on! Get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

If you don't have an umbrella to carry, I will get one for you
Come on! Get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

If you don't have sandals to wear, I will get a pair for you
Come on! Get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!
At Ballala's Field is *Tambila*, get up, let's go!

Tulu Original: "Ballāle boṭṭuḍu tambila..." in B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashri, *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu,* SDM Tulu Chair, Mangalore University, 1996

24. Let's go, dear, to holy Kaveri Spring!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring![25]

It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!

Heavy it is, lord my dear
The umbrella I hold, I find very heavy!
It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!

---

[25] The reference is to the transition of the sun from the sixth to the seventh solar month, which is considered auspicious because river Kaveri is believed to have sprung up on that day. A large number of devotees congregate at Talakaveri in Kodagu to take a holy dip at the origin-spring of the river. This folk-song may have its source closer to the ghats, in Sullia- Sampaje region, from where people are more likely to head to the Kaveri Spring. Otherwise Tulunadu does not show any familiarity with river Kaveri which journeys to the east. There is also belief that a girl after she attains puberty should bathe in a holy river. People closer to the ghats take such girls to the Kaveri Spring, while others find Nethravathi or Kumaradhara holy enough to purify their daughters.

Heavy they are, lord my dear
The bangles I wear, I find very heavy!
It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!

Heavy they are, lord my dear
The finger-rings I wear, I find very heavy!
It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!

Heavy they are, lord my dear
The black-beads I wear, I find very heavy!
It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!

Heavy they are, lord my dear
Chain of coins I wear, I find very heavy!
It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!

Heavy they are, lord my dear
Jingling anklets I wear, I find very heavy!
It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!

Heavy they are, lord my dear
Ear-hangings I wear, I find very heavy!
It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!

Heavy they are, lord my dear
Ear-studs I wear, I find very heavy!
It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!

Heavy they are, lord my dear
Toe-rings I wear, I find very heavy!
It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!

Heavy they are, lord my dear
Nose-stud I wear, I find very heavy!
It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!

Let's go...let's go my dear wife,
Let's go to holy Kaveri Spring!
It's very hot, lord my dear
Even moonlight I find very hot!

Tulu Original: "Pōyamma jēvū pōyī..." in B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashri, *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu,* SDM Tulu Chair, Mangalore University, 1996

25. O God Govinda!

O God Govinda![26]
O God Govinda!

On the left is an anthill
On the right is an anthill
In between is serpent's anthill
There emerged, behold!
Twin boys wonderful!
Born they were not to a father
Reared they were not by a mother
Shared they not blood with either
There emerged, behold!
Twin boys wonderful!

---

[26] This song of Jogi Purushas is associated with itinerant groups linked to the Natha cult, which has its centre at Kadri, Mangaluru, in Dakshina Kannada. The presiding deity in the temple itself is Śiva as Manjunatha, although historically the temple has had many associations. The exclamation, 'O God Govinda!' sounds Vaishnava, but it has no such association. It is just an invocation to God, in His praise, in gratitude or for whatever reason. It appears as refrain in many folksongs. For example, in a folksong '*Govinda Badane*' which we have not included in this collection, the situation is one of a Christian woman growing brinjals (egg plant) and hawking them around. That song has the refrain of 'Govinda' which is not an invocation to any sectarian god. In Tulunadu the Shaiva-Vaishnava divide is not very pronounced. Madhwas function as priests in Siva temples here. They are comfortable with it, as are the gods!

Small boys grew big
Grew soon our boys
They said to themselves
They had neither father
Nor had they mother
Nor did they have sisters any
Nor did they have
Family of their own
That's what they said,
Said the twins as they grew

No rice or salt to eat, they said
So said our boys wonderful!
No clothes to wear, they said
So said our boys wonderful!
No gold or silver to adorn, they said,
So said our boys wonderful!

So they said to their God
So they said to their Maker

O my children, said the God,
Go to the lotus-pond yonder
Take a deep dip in the pond
Emerge out of it soon
At mid-noon there you stand
Showing your back to the west
Facing the east, dear boys,
Folding hands and pressing fingers ten
Stand in obeisance solemn!
Said their God, their Maker!

To the lotus-pond yonder
Went our boys wonderful
Took a deep dip in the pond
Emerge they did from the pond
Stood there they at mid-noon
Stood there with their backs to the west
Stood there they with their face to the east
Folding their hands and pressing fingers ten
Stood they in obeisance solemn!

Lo! They saw a palace of gold!
A golden palace for children wonderful!
The younger one then said,
Look, my brother elder,
This is a palace made for us
Enter it, let us enter it,
Enter first with right foot in

So did our brothers wonderful
Enter the palace made for them
Putting their right feet in as bidden

There they had rice and salt,
The brothers had them all to eat
They had clothes to wear,
The brothers had clothes to wear!
They had gold and silver,
The brothers had them all to adorn

The brothers ate their feast to their fill
Cleaned the place where they ate
Said then the younger to the elder:

We should now work as we should
The work of singing to the glory of God!

They then took a bottle-gourd big
Of its shell they made a string-drone fine
Cut they a sugar-cane stalk to size
Made it a flute of enchanting tune
Tore they out a piece of cloth
Made it they into a mendicant's bag

Lo! They set forth to the temple there
They head for Kadri temple located there!
Offer they did things they vowed
They then moved out to go round
To go round villages and towns
Singing along to the glory of God!

They go round villages and towns
They call themselves Jogi Purushas[27]
They go round villages and towns
Thrice they whisper hymns and move around
Thrice they call out God and move around
They move around and dance around
Thus our Jogi Purushas sing and go around!

They go around places whole year round
Receive they wages in rice and grains

---

[27] The Jogi Purushas are connected to the Jogi Mathas in the district. There are other Jogi Mathas in the region as in Vitla, but the one in Kadri is the most prominent. The advent of the *Nātha Pantha* (sect) to Tulunadu has altered in some ways the religious and social fabric of the region.

Return they to Kadri temple they honour
Offer their vows to the temple they honour
Fulfilling the vows they made
Our Jogi Purushas return to their village

The year's tour, they say is done!
It is done, say our Jogi Purushas
O God Govinda! O God Govinda!

Tulu Original: "Hā hō Gōbinda..." in B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashri, *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu,* SDM Tulu Chair, Mangalore University, 1996

26. What all Wonderful Flowers...!

What all wonderful flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla![28]

Jasmine flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Hibiscus flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Rose flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Red jasmine flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Flowers of holy basil he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Marigold flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Champaka flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Suragi flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

---

[28] Jogi Kumara of Vitla is apparently a reference to an acetic, perhaps an itinerant one. One way to look at his fascination for flowers and his labour to bring so many varieties of them is to suggest that they were meant for the worship of his god. However, that the song is sung by women may also suggest that these flowers have some mundane destination.

Screw-pine flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Bayya-mallige flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Abbalige flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Chrysanthemum flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Areca flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Ixora flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Clustered jasmine flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Iruvantige flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Suruḷi flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

What all wonderful flowers he has brought,
Our Kumara, that Jogi Kumara of Vitla!

Tulu Original: "Eñceñci purupō konaideppa Kumārē" in B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashri, *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu*, SDM Tulu Chair, Mangalore University, 1996

Lullabies

27. Where are you going, Squirrel Dear?

Where are you going, Squirrel Dear?
To the Lord's field I go, to pick my paddy!
What if you stumble upon stones and thorns so sharp?
Into a hole I go, for sure!
Who is there in the hole, dear?
I have my grandma verily there!
What does grandma give you, dear?
Grandma gives me a pair of jingle bells!
What do you do with those jingle bells?
To my dear cow I tie those jingle bells!
What does your cow give you in turn?
My cow gives me milk- milk aplenty!
What do you do with that much of milk?
That milk I place before our God so great!
What does your God so great give you?
The God blesses me truly with sandal paste!
What do you do with that sandal paste?
The sandal paste I smear on forehead of mine!
What does your forehead give you?
Forehead gives me lice so many!
What do you do with lice so many?
The lice I will give to the hen they rear!
What does the hen give you in her turn?
The hen gives me eggs - eggs so big!
What do you do with the eggs you get?
When in the neighbourhood guests turn up
I do *chai-chui* with them, for sure!

Tulu Original: "Ōḍe Pōpa Kuṇḍacca?" In B. A. Viveka Rai, *Tuḷu Janapada Sāhitya*, Kannada Sahitya Parishat, Bengaluru, 1985

28. Pasture so Vast, Green Is Plentiful!

In the pasture so vast, the green is plentiful!
In the pasture so vast, the green is plentiful!

In the pasture so vast, the green is plentiful!
Why, why have you not, buffalo, gone to graze?
What am I to do, if your servant didn't untie the rope?
Why didn't you, servant, untie that rope?
What am I to do if your mistress refused my gruel?
Why did you, mistress, refuse the servant his gruel?
What am I to do if the rat took away the sieve I use?
Pussy cat! Pussy cat! Why didn't you catch that rat?
What am I to do if your daughter didn't let me lick the milk?
Why didn't you, daughter, give the cat milk to lick?
What am I to do if my cow is taken away by tiger so fierce?
Why didn't you, hunter, shoot the tiger down?
What am I to do if my gun is eaten away by white ants?
Why didn't you, dear hen, peck at those white ants?
What am I to do if my beak got truly blunt?
Why didn't you, blacksmith, sharpen that beak so blunt?
What am I to do if thieves made off with my chisel and adze?
Why didn't you, guardian deity, catch those thieves so vile?
Why should I do that if you didn't give me annual offerings?

Tulu Original: "Tittiri, Tittiri majaluḍu Panti Erkuduṇḍe" In B. A. Viveka Rai, *Tuḷu Janapada Sāhitya,* Kannada Sahitya Parishat, Bengaluru, 1985

29. Our Squirrel Dear

Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!
Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!

Where have been roaming around, squirrel dear?
Roaming around Tulunadu, here I return!

Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!
Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!

Which tree did you see, squirrel dear?
Saw a mango tree there and here I return!
Saw a mango tree there and climbed it for sure!
Climbing up the tree there, ate mango fruit for sure!

Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!
Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!

Which tree did you see, squirrel dear?
Saw a jack tree there and here I return!
Saw a jack tree there and climbed it for sure!
Climbing up the tree there, ate jackfruit for sure!

Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!
Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!

Where have been roaming around, squirrel dear?
Roaming around Eastern land, here I return!

Where have been roaming around, squirrel dear?
Roaming around Eastern land, here I return!
Which plant did you see, squirrel dear?
Saw a chilli plant there and here I return!
Saw a chilli plant there and caught it for sure!
Catching up the plant there, ate red chillies for sure!

Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!
Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!

Which tree did you see, squirrel dear?
Saw a palm tree there and here I return!
Saw a palm tree there and climbed it for sure!
Climbing up the tree there, ate palm fruits for sure!

Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!
Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!

Which tree did you see, squirrel dear?
Saw a blackberry tree and here I return!
Saw a blackberry tree and climbed it for sure!
Climbing up the tree there, ate blackberries for sure!

Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!
Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!

Which tree did you see, squirrel dear?
Saw a cashew tree there and here I return!
Saw a cashew tree there and climbed it for sure!
Climbing up the tree there, ate cashew fruits for sure!

Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!
Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!

Which tree did you see, squirrel dear?
Saw a plantain tree there and here I return!
Saw a plantain tree there and climbed it for sure!
Climbing up the tree there, ate plantains for sure!

Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!
Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!

Which tree did you see, squirrel dear?
Saw a guava tree there and here I return!
Saw a guava tree there and climbed it for sure!
Climbing up the tree there, ate guava fruits for sure!

Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!
Squirrel dear, our squirrel dear!

Tulu Original: "Caṇilaṇṇa", in Yadupathi Gowda, D, "Belthangadi Parisarada Mērara Kuṇitagaḷu", M. Phil. Dissertation submitted to Mangalore University, 1990

30. King Parrot Talks

Rambles and drivels, he Parrot our lord!
Rambles endlessly, Parrot our lord!

Sat he on plantain flower-bud, Parrot our lord
Sucked he its honey sweet, Parrot our lord!

Rambles and drivels, he Parrot our lord!
Rambles endlessly, Parrot our lord!

Sat he on ash-gourd flower, Parrot our lord
Sucked he its honey sweet, Parrot our lord!

Rambles and drivels, he Parrot our lord!
Rambles endlessly, Parrot our lord!

Sat he on sweet-gourd flower, Parrot our lord
Sucked he its honey sweet, Parrot our lord!

Rambles and drivels, he Parrot our lord!
Rambles endlessly, Parrot our lord!

Sat he on bottle-gourd flower, Parrot our lord
Sucked he its honey sweet, Parrot our lord!

Rambles and drivels, he Parrot our lord!
Rambles endlessly, Parrot our lord!

Sat he on cucumber flower, Parrot our lord
Sucked he its honey sweet, Parrot our lord!

Rambles and drivels, he Parrot our lord!
Rambles endlessly, Parrot our lord!

Sat he on mango tree, Parrot our lord
Ate he mango, juicy and sweet, Parrot our lord!

Rambles and drivels, he Parrot our lord!
Rambles endlessly, Parrot our lord!

Sat he on guava tree, Parrot our lord
Ate he guava, crisp and sweet, Parrot our lord!

Rambles and drivels, he Parrot our lord!
Rambles endlessly, Parrot our lord!

Sat he on plantain tree, Parrot our lord
Ate he plantain, ripe and sweet, Parrot our lord!

Rambles and drivels, he Parrot our lord!
Rambles endlessly, Parrot our lord!

Went he to the chilli plant, Parrot our lord
Pecked he chillies, red and hot, Parrot our lord!

Rambles and drivels, he Parrot our lord!
Rambles endlessly, Parrot our lord!

Tulu Original: "Giḷi Rāya", in Yadupathi Gowda, D, "Belthangadi Parisarada Mērara Kuṇitagaḷu", M.Phil. Dissertation submitted to Mangalore University, 1990

31. Children O Children, Noisy Children!

Children O Children! Noisy Children!
Children O Children! Noisy Children!

Noisy children, what do you want children?
Noisy children, want any *roti*, naughty children?

Noisy children, what do you want children?
Noisy children, want you some spanks, children?

Noisy children, what do you want children?
Noisy children, want you rice-gruel, children?

Noisy children, what do you want children?
Noisy children, want you curry, children?

Noisy children, what do you want children?
Noisy children, want you plantain, children?

Children O Children! Noisy Children!
Children O Children! Noisy Children!

Children O Children! Pot-bellied Children!
Children O Children! Squint-eyed Children!

Children O Children! Red-haired Children!
Children O Children! Pug-nosed Children!

Children O Children! Bow-legged Children!
Children O Children! Toothless Children!

Children O Children! Noisy Children!
Children O Children! Noisy Children!

Children O Children! Fight they, these Children!
Children O Children! Wrestle they, these Children!

Children O Children! Roll they, these Children!
Children O Children! Scream they, these Children!

Children O Children! Noisy Children!
Children O Children! Noisy Children!

Children O Children!At Bhatta's house is *śrāddha!*[29]
Children O Children! Ran they to the feast there!

Children O Children! Slipped they as they ran there!
Children O Children! Fell they as they ran there!

Children O Children! Noisy Children!
Children O Children! Noisy Children!

Noisy children, what do you want children?
Naughty children, what do you want children?

Tulu Original: "Jōkulappa jōkulu..." in B.A. Viveka Rai and Rajashri, *Tuḷu Kabitagaḷu*,, SDM Tulu Chair, Mangalore University, 1996

[29] Śrāddha is the annual ritual performed by Brahmins in memory of the departed parents. It is accompanied with a feast offered to the departed souls but eaten by the living. It is normally restricted to the members of the family but workers and tenants may also be fed on that occasion.

Dance Songs

32. The Song of Āṭi Kaḷeñja

Coming in Āṭi, Kaḷeñja[30] chases away the evil
The evil of the East he takes away to the East
Coming in Āṭi, Kaḷeñja chases away the evil
The evil of the West he takes away to the West

Kaḷeñja was born in the World Mundane
Grew up he in the World Ethereal
Lord he is of the World Ethereal
Berma is his father, mother Māṅkāḷi

By the age of ten he was sixteen,
By the age of seven, seventy he was
In seventy months he grew his moustache red
In seventy months he grew his saffron beard

Stood he on the earth and saw the sky above
Perched he on the sky, he gazed the earth below
Remembering Lord Narayana he touched His feet
Saluting the Lord, he came down to the earth

In the South did he assemble his forces
In the North did he set up his kingdom
Carried he on his shoulder his beating drum
His parasol of reed he carried in style

---

[30] The month of *Āṭi* is part of the rainy season and is considered a month of scarcity and disease in Tulunadu. The word '*Kaḷeñja*' means 'the one who removes', - 'the remover of the inauspiciousness of *Āṭi*.'

Custodian he is of the world around
Wielding the shield he moves unbound
Carrying the cudgel of a wand so powerful
Chases he away the invading evil

For thirty days in Āṭi at mother-in-law's house,
For thirty days in Sōṇa[31] with his wife he spends
Protected he his mother-in-law at night
Looked after he his wife when all was bright

Eating plantain tuber he bloated his paunch
Eating colocasia tuber he irritated his throat
Eating mango-pickle his teeth felt sour
Eating oil-cake for cattle felt he a choke

Begs he for his share of dried jack-fruit seeds
Begs he for his share of new jack-fruit seeds
He goes begging at every door in the village
By doing so he chases away evil around

If the evil is of the dog, let ashes wash it away!
If the evil is of the cat, let milk wash it away!
If the evil is of the cattle, let grass wash it away!
If the evil is of humans, to the East it be driven away!

Last year, at this time, he chased the evil away
This year too he has come to drive the evil away
Coming in Āṭi, Kaḷeñja chases away the evil
The evil of the East he takes away to the East

---

[31] *Sōṇa* is the month following *Āṭi*. It is brighter and offers greater hope and possibilities.

Coming in Āṭi, Kaḷeñja chases away the evil
The evil of the East he takes away to the East
Coming in Āṭi, Kaḷeñja chases away the evil
The evil of the West he takes away to the West

Tulu Original: "Āṭi Kaḷeñja" in B.A. Viveka Rai, *Tuḷu Janapada Sāhitya*, Kannada Sahitya Parishat, Bengaluru, 1985

33. The Song of Karaṅgōlu

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

Where was *Karaṅgōlu,* the Good Fortune born,[32] Kaanthakka?
Born it was in the East, at the boundary of a field
Born it was in the West, in the middle of flowing river
Born it was beyond the Seven Seas' shore

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

Bring we should through the forest of *Māderu* creeper
Bring we should by piercing it well in *Koṭṭe* thorn
Bring we should by stringing it well in *Sūri* thorn
Bring we should by wrapping it well in *Iṭṭe* leaves

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

Carry we should while Baidya holds his smoking gun
Carry we should by tagging it to the bow at hand
Carry we should by fanning it in *Nekki* leaves
Carry we should, dipping it in water in coconut shell
Carry it we should by floating in water in wooden vessel

---

[32] *Karaṅgōlu,* is the personification of a bundle of paddy-corn, and a remover of inauspiciousness and a herald of good fortune. However, in the *Karaṅgōlu* dance ears of paddy are not held; instead a bundle of *Nekki* leaves is used.

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

Who can bring *Karaṅgōlu*, the Good Fortune?
If she be *Maṅgāra Māniga*,[33] she will surely bring it
If he be *Kantāra Kariya Kurovu*,[34] he will surely bring it
If they be children in *Karaṅgōlu* guise, they surely bring it

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

Who's there, Mistress of the house? Open the door!
I know not how to open the door!
Turn the key and slip the bolt down!

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

O Mistress! Wake up the lord of the house!
I know not how to wake the lord up!
Pour water on him! Lord surely wakes up!

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

O Mistress! Wake up the child asleep!
I know not how to wake the child up!
Give a tumbler of milk to child to wake him up!

---

[33] Name of a lady.
[34] Name of a man.

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

O Mistress of the house! Is the Master home?
The Master of the house has gone out to the fair
What does he do, your lord, at the fair?
Gone he to buy a buffalo yielding pot-full of milk
Gone he to buy a cow yielding tumbler-full of milk

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

A pair of oxen, *Kāri-Kabila,*[35] he brought to plough
Two servants, *Kānada-Kāṭada*[36] he made them in charge
Koṅkaṇa-Baṅkaṇa[37] were the two fields he levelled

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

On the path between fields he planted coconut plants
In the garden above he reared areca plants superior
Planted he seedlings of plantain so superior

---

[35] The names of the oxen suggesting their colour, - the one dark and the other, tawny-coloured.

[36] *Kānada-Kāṭada* here refers to the names of the dalit servants commissioned to look after the oxen or buffaloes. However, they are, in the larger cultural context of Tulunadu, considered as the cultural heroes of the Mansa community, like Kōṭi-Cennaya of Billava community and Mudda-Kalala of Mēra community. Here in the *Karaṅgōlu* dance *Kānada-Kāṭada* figure not only as dancers but also with some claim of supernatural qualities and magical powers.

[37] Naming of the fields is not an uncommon practice in Tulunadu.

Grew he jack-fruit trees on the dry field above
Raised he grove of trees and shrubs for medicinal use

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

When he installed the bronze bell at the Western shrine
Lo! The precious tongue of the bell was snapped!
When he installed a pearly bell at the Eastern shrine
Lo! The pearly bell of the shrine too fell and broke!

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The lord bade *Kānada-Kāṭada* to plough the field
But no pair of ploughs was found to plough the field
Cut they a *nux vomica* tree to make a pair of ploughs

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The lord bade *Kānada-Kāṭada* to plough the field
But no pair of yokes was found to plough the field
Cut they a jack-fruit tree to make a pair of yokes

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The lord bade *Kānada-Kāṭada* to plough the field
But the pair of yokes had no rings of iron
Caught they a worm to fix it as rings on yokes

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The lord bade *Kānada-Kāṭada* to plough the field
No rope they found to tie the oxen to the yoke
Caught they a rat-snake to tie the oxen to the yoke

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The lord bade *Kānada-Kāṭada* to plough the field
But no short rope they found to bridle the oxen
Caught they a serpent to use as a bridle

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The lord bade *Kānada-Kāṭada* to plough the field
But no rope they found to tie the oxen
Caught they a water-snake to tie the oxen

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The lord bade *Kānada-Kāṭada* to plough the field
But no cane they found to drive the oxen
Caught they a krait to use as a cane

"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The lord bade *Kānada-Kāṭada* to plough the field
But no ploughshare they found in the plough they made
Caught they a skink to use as a ploughshare

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The lord bade *Kānada-Kāṭada* to plough the field
But had no nails to fix ploughshare to the plough
Caught they leeches to nail ploughshare to the plough

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The lord bade *Kānada-Kāṭada* to plough the field
He bade them to plough the field to the West
He bade them to plough the field to the East

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The lord bade them plough the field twice
He bade them put green manure from the cowshed
The lord bade them plough the field five times over
He bade them put dry manure on the ploughed field

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

To the East they go to get *Kayame* paddy[38] white
To the West they go to get *Kayame* paddy black
On one field they sow seeds of paddy white
On another field they sow seeds of paddy black

---

[38] One of the more prominent paddy types of Tulunadu. Many of the varieties of native paddy have now become either extinct or have been replaced by imports from other regions.

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

On the third day of sowing they drained water from the field
On the seventh day they let the water into the field
Germinated the in needle-like sharpness
Sprouted they as little bunches of leaves green

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

The crop ripened into a golden hue
It took on the colour of screw-pine flower
But parrots did not allow the crop to grow up well
The parrots they trapped and put them in the cage
There they sounded like reading their lessons!

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

When the crops reclined the boar had their share
The boar should be trapped and put in the cage
In the cage he would hop and grunt

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

To harvest the crop we should get serrated scythe
To bundle the harvest we should get creepers from jungle
The harvest we should carry to bring to the front yard
We get threshing-slab of stone to beat sheaves of paddy

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

To collect the paddy threshed we take a broomstick stump
We winnow the paddy and make it clean
The heaps paddy we carry to the granary at garret

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

In the month of *Māyi* the lord had his paddy stored
In *Suggi* he had brought out to boil and husk
To the children of *Karaṅgōlu* give winnow-full of paddy!
Hearing this, our lord and his mistress muttered a grunt!

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

Give us five, five measures of paddy
Give us five, five sets of betel leaves and nuts
If we are to tell all our tales in full
We may have to tell them till the dawn!

May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim,
"May you prosper! May you prosper!" we proclaim

Tulu Original: Collected by K. Chinnappa Gowda. Kannada version in K. Chinnappa Gowda, *Samskriti Siri,* Madipu Prakashana, Mangalagangotri, 2003

34. The Song of Mādira

Mādira our girl, is very charming, our Mādira[39]
Mādira, the dancer, is very charming, our Mādira

Chenna our boy is fair and handsome, Mādira
Fair he is, do you marry him, Mādira?

Fair he is, do you marry him, Mādira?
Want to serve him with bronze ladle, Mādira?

How tall is Chenna, who takes me with him?
Can't say how tall, but tall as a wooden stump!

How tall is Chenna, who takes me with him?
May be of the height on which bundles rest!

How big is Chenna, who takes me with him?
Yes! Like a rotund vessel in which rice is measured!

Mādira's menarche occurred in seven storey mansion
Pined she and wrote a letter from up the hills beyond

Charming girls are coquettish and vain, Mādira
Under sweet mango tree stones aplenty are strewn

Yet enchanted was Chenna by the girl so charming
Even as cock was drawn to peck at paddy when spread

Last year she wanted to go East, our Mādira
She didn't, as she was hit by a threshing rod, Mādira

---

[39] Mādira is supposed to be a very charming lady from the *Nalike* community. She is also an expert dancer. Her dance is here described as encapsulating all the charm she is capable of expressing in her dance.

Headed for the North this year, our Mādira
Not even for four days her uncle's son let her stay

What did you bring from uncle's house, Mādira?
Look at this, and that and my hands full of jewels!

Your money and jewels shouldn't be in hands, Mādira
Put them in a bag and secure them well, Mādira

A lass of golden hue with a hair-do fine, Mādira
Wait she did for her uncle's son, did our Mādira

Did all her signs with her toes, our Mādira
Did that clutching her saree's end, our Mādira!

When flowers were abloom, with them I adorned my hair
When it was time for fruits, I ate my fill, Mādira

When Mādira goes dancing I know how to sing
With rice and vegetables, the Lord knows his cooking

Look not around to find who is your Lord, Mādira
The Lord is the one who has grains in mounds, Mādira

Went hither, our Mādira, went thither our Mādira
Down she went to rivulet to catch her prawns, Mādira

Caught she some prawns, for sure, our Mādira
But herons pulled them down to slush, poor Mādira

Mādira our girl, is very charming, our Mādira
Mādira, the dancer, is very charming, our Mādira

Tulu Original: "Mādira", in Palthadi Ramakrishna Achar, 'Nalike Janāṅgada Kuṇitagaḷu- Ondu Adhyayana' Unpublished PhD dissertation, Mangalore University, 1995

35. The Song of Māṅkāḷi

Go round, Māṅkāḷi,[40] Go round!
Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!

Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
Go round the deity of Baleendra Lord!

Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!

Baleendra God, she saw our Māṅkāḷi,
Offer him coconuts, did our Māṅkāḷi

On his glorious return annual, Māṅkāḷi
Sacrificial altar she raised, our Māṅkāḷi

Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!

---

[40] *Māṅkāḷi* is Mahakali. The folk belief is that she is both the purveyor and remover of all the diseases and pestilence, and that she demands periodic propitiations of blood-sacrifices. In this belief she is *Māri*, a folk deity of exacting habits, and *Māri* shrines abound in Tulunadu. However, these days this folk deity is increasingly getting equated with goddess Durga, one of the forms which the consort of Shiva takes to destroy some of the more fierce demons figuring in our mythologies.

Sacrificial altar she raised, our Māṅkāḷi
Lit the lamps all over, our Māṅkāḷi
Bloomed she as a child, our Māṅkāḷi
Hummed she as a bee, our Māṅkāḷi

Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!

Held she the child in her left hand, our Māṅkāḷi
Suckled she the child with right breast, Māṅkāḷi

Held she a mirror to see her face, Māṅkāḷi
Draped her back with a shawl, our Māṅkāḷi

Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!

As she walked in town in the fort, Māṅkāḷi
Hailed she was Ganga-Gowri, our Māṅkāḷi

Snorting with nose fierce, our Māṅkāḷi
Walked she thousands of miles, our Māṅkāḷi

Stretching her tongue ferocious, Māṅkāḷi
Marched she hundreds of miles, our Māṅkāḷi

Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!

Slew she a harlot, our Māṅkāḷi
Danced she in saree she wore in grace, Māṅkāḷi

Slew she a Pambada man,[41] Māṅkāḷi
Seized she his drum, our Māṅkāḷi

Slew she a hunter, our Māṅkāḷi
With his gun she danced, our Māṅkāḷi

Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!

Disembowel she did, our Māṅkāḷi
Wore the entrails as holy thread, our Māṅkāḷi

Grabbed she many a bone, our Māṅkāḷi
Used them to play stick-game, Māṅkāḷi

Gouged she eyes so many, Māṅkāḷi
Used them as cowries to play, Māṅkāḷi

Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
Saw she the glory of Lord Manjunatha,[42] Māṅkāḷi
Felt she fulfilled, our Māṅkāḷi

Saw she the flag-post of Lord Kōṭi Liṅga,[43] our Māṅkāḷi
Felt she fulfilled, our Māṅkāḷi

---

[41] A person belonging to the caste of authorised impersonators of spirits (like *Nalike* and *Parava*) worshipped in Tulunadu. The word *Pambada* means 'the one who sings' even as the word *Nalike* means a 'dancer' and *Parava* means a 'drummer'. All these activities go into the ritual propitiation of *daivas.*
[42] The reference is to Lord Manjunatha of Kadri of Mangalore or Dharmastala.
[43] Though 'Kōṭi Liṅga' or a 'Crore of Liṅgas' is not unknown in Tulu region, perhaps this refers to 'Sahasra Liṅgeśwara' or a 'Thousand Liṅgas' referred to the temple at Uppinangadi at the confluence of the two rivers, Nētrāvati and Kumāradhāra. Here the worship of Mahakali has considerable popularity, as she combines in herself the folk imagination of Kallurṭi and Agamaic image of Durga.

Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
When she arrived in Tulu land, our Māṅkāḷi
Earned she the name of Mahamaayi, our Māṅkāḷi

Whenever she was on her annual visit, Māṅkāḷi
Southern lamp perennial shone very bright, Māṅkāḷi

Make your entry from the Western door, Māṅkāḷi
Fill us with riches through the Eastern door, Māṅkāḷi

Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!
Go round, Māṅkāḷi, Go round!

Tulu Original: "Māṅkāḷi", in Palthadi Ṛamakrishna Achar, 'Nalike Janāṅgada Kuṇitagaḷu- Ondu Adhyayana' Unpublished PhD dissertation, Mangalore University, 1995

36. The Song of Kanyāpu

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu![44] Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

There up the ghats, at Kalyantha fields, Kanyāpu
In Talagunda kingdom,[45] and palace thereof, Kanyāpu
Was born our Kanyāpu, our Child Kanyāpu!

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

Devu Setty was her father,
Oopathi Kalyani her mother
Seven sons they had
To one daughter, Kanyāpu!

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

For daughter Kanyāpu they had vowed
To God Somanatha[46] they had vowed

---

[44] Kanyāpu is both the name of the girl and reference to her maidenhood.
[45] Reference toTalagunda kingdom need not suggest a definite historical location for the story; it may just be a reference to a historical memory. The 'Kalyanta field' may have been derived from the memory of 'Kalyāṇa'. We need not hasten to associate this story with anything related to the activities of Basavanna or Bijjala!
[46] There are many Somanatha (Shiva) temples in Tulunadu, both on the coast and in the interior.

A bunch of golden areca nuts, they vowed
A silver cradle and fistfuls of coins too

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

Kanyāpu at birth filled areca spathe
From areca spathe she moved to cradle
From cradle she moved to mat that was spread
She grew to be seven years old, Kanyāpu[47]

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

Brothers seven were keen to get
Every jewel to their sister dear
Eight weights of silver they got
Seven weights of gold they bought

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

Took they the metals to touchstone
To the goldsmith to melt them
And ordered the jewels be made by him

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

---

[47] The description of Kanyāpu resonates with the description of the miraculous birth of Siri in the *Siri Sandhi*.

Make for our sister Kanyāpu
Ear-studs of gold and ear-hangings too!
Make for our sister nose-studs of pearls
Necklace of coins and chain with pendant
Diamond ring and many bangles of gold
Jingling chains for her feet and a waist-band too

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

The only sister they had, dear Kanyāpu
She wanted to go to Tulunadu
Adorned she with many jewels and all
Wrapped her slender waist with golden saree
Put on a blouse of silk to cover her piercing breasts

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

Adorned she her hair with areca flowers
Brought she champaka from champaka grove
Brought she jasmine from jasmine garden
Brought she chrysanthemum from flower garden
She sat in a bower to string all the flowers

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

Combed her hair to the left in flowers to adorn
Combed her hair to the right in flowers to adorn
On Maayi's full-moon the vows I should fulfil
I should descend the ghat to go to Tulunadu
To fulfil my vows to God I go to Tulunadu

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

She called out Komara the carpenter
Ordered she for cradle of seven parts
From bamboo reed of three pieces
Sat on it she with the things she vowed

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

Took a bunch of areca nuts of gold, our Kanyāpu
Took a bundle of betel leaves of silver, our Kanyāpu
A child's replica in gold in silver cradle
And fistfuls of gold-coins she carried, our Kanyāpu
Taking all she descended to Tulunadu, our Kanyāpu

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

On Maayi's full-moon, Kanyāpu
Came down from the ghats, our Kanyāpu
Reached she Tulunadu, our Kanyāpu
Danced she in houses many, our Kanyāpu

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

On the full-moon night did Kanyāpu
Danced she at the yard of the lord, Kanyāpu
Gyrating well, she danced so well, our Kanyāpu
Pretty she was, she attracted all, our Kanyāpu

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

On her way to Tulunadu, our Kanyāpu
Reached she Madenadu, our Kanyāpu
Moved she to the north of Sampaje, our Kanyāpu
Came to the shrine of God Somanatha, our Kanyāpu
Brought Him the things she vowed, our Kanyāpu
Got she in return the blessings she sought, our Kanyāpu

O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...
O Denna denna denana, Child Kanyāpu! Denna denananaa...

Tulu Original: "Kanyāpu", in Palthadi Ramakrishna Achar, 'Nalike Janāṅgada Kuṇitagaḷu- Ondu Adhyayana' Unpublished PhD dissertation, Mangalore University, 1995

[The mapping of this song poses some interesting problems. At certain points it looks as if the narrator has Nidgal area in mind in the Charmadi ghat route, in Ujire-Belthangadi region. The resonance with the Siri story, the temple of Somanatha there and the festival held at the Maayi full-moon suggest this. However, at the end of the narrative, the route gets shifted to Madikeri, with its reference to Madenadu and Sampaje. Clearly this is the freedom which the narrator takes in unfolding the story of Kanyāpu.]

37. The Song of Jōgi Puruṣas

In the days of yore
Lived seven Jōgi men
They had one sister dear[48]

On a full-moon day they said,
They would be off to battlefield
They bade their wives to look after
Their dear sister well

Not long after the brothers left
Sister became a woman complete
But got she soap-nut in coconut shell
And bade they she to bathe in rivulet
Gave they her watery gruel to drink
Ordered her to stay in the room very dark

Bade they she to fetch leaves from forest
Bade they she to fetch water from the well
The poor girl did all so very well

It was a season of blooms, this season
They bade her join to pick flowers in jungle

---

[48] This narrative poem has resemblance with certain folk stories of Tulunadu. They highlight the affection in which sister is held in the matrilineal society of the region. The persecution and tragedy of the sister are comfortably linked to the miracle of being gathered to the God, which is the familiar theme of the making of many *daivas* of Tulunadu.

Took they a basket of gold
And a silver clasp to carry a sickle

They saw a tree in colourful bloom
They picked the flowers they could reach
Then they fixed a ladder to reach the tree
And bade the girl to go up the tree
To pick up flowers in all branches seven

The Jōgati girl[49] went up the ladder
To reach the branches all the seven
To pick flowers to brothers' wives seven
When she wanted to pick one for herself
The wives so wicked took away the ladder

The wives of brothers returned home
Jōgati girl was left high and dry
In the dead of night came to the tree
Came there two tigers hungry

Up there on the tree Jōgati girl did cry
On the tigers fell her cascading tears
Tigers saw the girl perched on the tree
Went they up and pulled her down
To make her into pieces and gobbling her up

But they did not eat all her up
They left behind on the bleeding ground

---

[49] *Jōgati* girl is a reference to the female of the Jōgi men, the seven brothers who dote on their sister. We have explained elsewhere the presence of the Jōgi centres in Tulunadu. There is another Jōgati cult associated with the worship of Yellamma in north Karnataka.

The little finger of her little right hand
Sauntered in an old woman, a beggar
Mistaking the finger for a piece of turmeric
Put it in the bag she carried, and
Preserve it she did in an earthen pot new

The brothers of the girl, seven in all
Returned now from the battle they won
Asked they their wives where their sister was

"When frogs grow up they stay not in the pond
When the girl grows up, she won't stay at home
Tigers have carried away your sister!" they said

Distraught, seven brothers left their home
Left in search of their missing sister
The seven went in seven directions
Then at last reached the beggarly woman

There the girl who departed to World Ethereal
Sprang out of the pot to the World Mundane!
The brothers embraced their sister dear
Return they did to their home together

In anger against their wives so wicked
They burnt them down with the palace they lived
Then the Purushas seven and their sister
Went to the shrine of Kadri there
To vanish, all of them, to the higher realm!

Tulu Original: "Māyida Puruseru", in Palthadi Ramakrishna Achar, 'Nalike Janāṅgada Kuṇitagaḷu- Ondu Adhyayana' Unpublished PhD dissertation, Mangalore University, 1995

38. The Song of Chennu

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

Where were you born, Chennu, where were you reared?
Born in the North, my Mistress, but living in the South

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

What's your mother's name, Chennu, what's your father's?
What's your mother's name, Chennu, what's your father's?
Mother's name, Mistress, is Aaaramboolu-Iiramboolu
Father's name, Mistress, is Kooteda Babbu

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

When he was at Kōṭe, Mistress, he was Sēregāra of Kōṭe
When he was at Adūru, Mistress, he was Gōra of Adūru
When he was at Kōṭe, Mistress, he was Sēregāra of Kōṭe
When he was at Venur, Mistress, he was Mayya of Venur

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

Where do you go from there, Chennu, where do you go from here?
Where do you go from here, Chennu, where do you go from there?

To the God at Kuntaaru, Mistress, butter I carry
To the God at Adūru, Mistress, cattle I take

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

In homes where coconuts are aplenty, Chennu begs for coconuts
Where oil-press there is, Chennu begs for oil for her hair
When Chennu's hair is dishevelled, they pour oil on her head
When Chennu goes hungry, they pour for her gruel of rice

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

To Chennu's hovel, dear, arrived many guests
As Chennu had nothing to cook, haystack she searched
Once haystack she searched, Chennu, searched she for paddy
Under ears of paddy she searched, Chennu, looked she for paddy

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

Big pot on oven she kept, Chennu, had but broken rice to put
To her hovel they came, Chennu, guests no less than five
Will you give me salt, my Mistress, will you give me chillies?
Will you give me salt, begged Chennu, will you give me chillies?

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

No salt for Chennu, said Mistress, no chillies for you!
No salt for Chennu, said Mistress, no chillies for you!

If no salt, my Mistress, get me its lees at least
If you have no chillies, Mistress, give me their dry stalks!

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

What have you in the belly, Chennu, what have you in the waist?
Child there was in the belly, Mistress, but empty is my waist
What's the name of the child, Chennu, what's its name?
The child's name, my Mistress, is Puuvamale-Ekkamale

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

On this side a *Bēṅga* tree, Chennu, that side a *Bēṅga* tree
To the branches of *Bēṅga* tree Chennu tied a cradle for free
Cradle was of brass, Chennu, its chains are of iron
The golden child it is, Chennu, swing the cradle she did

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

The child is crying, Chennu, as a bird is singing
Suckle it well, Chennu, give it to play a coconut shell
If the left breast is in trickle, Chennu, suckle it with the right
If the right breast is in trickle, Chennu, suckle it with the left

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

Who's now with the child, Chennu, who's with the child?
Tom cat is with the child, Mistress, and a black dog too!
Won't the dog bite it, Chennu, and won't the cat scratch?
The dog has sense, my Mistress, and the cat is kind!

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

If your child is crying, my Mistress, go inside your house
But come outside, my Mistress, because I am here to dance!
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

In Bangaadi ghat, Chennu, she was a golden girl
In Shiraadi ghat, Chennu was draped in saree graceful
From up the ghat to the Kaalantha field she moved
Does she sit on the bull to descend or to the tune of flute?
When she sat on the bull, Chennu, a bull dance it became
Descending to the tune of flute, Chennu, a flute dance it became!

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

If the evil is of the dog, let ashes wash it away!
If the evil is of the cat, let milk wash it away!
If the evil is of the cattle, let grass wash it away!
If the evil is of humans, beyond the sea it be driven away!

Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...
Lela leleelaa, Chennu, Lela leleelaa...

Tulu Original: "Cennu" in K. Abhayakumar, *Mugēraru- Janāṅga, Jānapada Adhyayana,* Directorate of Kannada and Culture, Bengaluru and Karnataka Tulu Sahitya Academy, Mangaluru, 1995

39. The Song of Charipadpu Chomakka

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka[50]
O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, what do you need, Chomakka?
Charipadpu Chomakka, let me tell you, Chomakka!

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, join your voice, Chomakka!
Join your voice, Chomakka, let me tell you Chomakka!

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, let me ask you, Chomakka!
Charipadpuda Chomakka, want a husband, Chomakka?
Want a husband, Chomakka? Want me too, Chomakka?

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, listened intently, Chomakka!
O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Listened intently, Chomakka, stood she up, Chomakka!
Stood she up, Chomakka, shook her saree, Chomakka!

---

[50] *'Caripaḍpu'* is the name of the place Chomakka hails from. *Caripaḍpu,* which figures in this song may actually be *'Tāri-paḍpu',* meaning a dry land where palm trees grow. *'Tāri-paḍpu'* may have become *'Caripaḍpu'* by way of palatalization.

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, toddy gets sour, Chomakka!
Toddy gets sour, Chomakka, rice gruel goes stale, Chomakka!

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, stoops she to dance, Chomakka!
Stoops she to dance, Chomakka, gyrates she, Chomakka!

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, come hither, Chomakka!
Come hither, Chomakka, some business with you, Chomakka!

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, for sure, went to her Charipadpu
Going to Charipadpu, she drank her toddy, Chomakka

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, drank she toddy and drank a lot
Drinking her toddy, she gestured her hands, Chomakka!

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, shall we go up the ghats, Chomakka?
Going up the ghats, Chomakka, we can work there Chomakka!

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, we can work there Chomakka!
Working there Chomakka, we can have our wages, Chomakka!

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, we can have our wages, Chomakka
Getting our wages, Chomakka, plough we can mountain slopes

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, let's go down the ghat, Chomakka!
Going down the ghat, Chomakka, let's go to our place, Chomakka!

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
Charipadpu Chomakka, come hither, Chomakka!
Come hither, Chomakka, let's play our drums, Chomakka!

O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka
O... O Chomakka! Charipadpu Chomakka

Tulu Original: "Charipadpuda Chomakka" in Koira N. Balepuni, *Mugērara Duḍi Kuṇitagaḷu : Swarūpa mattu Samskriti,* Dudi Prakashana, Balepuni, Bantwal, 2010

40. The Song of Thāli

Thāli[51] *Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa*
Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli's man has gone to Madikeri, Thāliyaa leleelaa
What will he bring from Madikeri, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Bring he will saree of flower-designs, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Bring he will bead-string of seven knots, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Put on I will bead-string of seven knots, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Wear the saree till it is all torn, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Which town did you roam around, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Roamed around Somwarpete, Thāliyaa leleelaa
What's Somwarpete known for? Thāliyaa leleelaa
To buy Bishop's Weed, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Which town did you roam around, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Roamed around Madikeri town, Thāliyaa leleelaa

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[51] Thāli is the name of a woman. The context of the poem is the migration of Tulu labourers to areas up the ghats to work in coffee and cardamom plantations. Here the references are to the towns like Madikeri and Somwarpete in Kodagu.

What's Madikeri town known for? Thāliyaa leleelaa
To buy clothes and dresses, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Dance with your back bent, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Bend your back and clap your hands, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Clap your hands, go round you should, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli dance has language another, Thāliyaa leleelaa
If I don't say it, my lips will, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Nekki creepers all over the lanes, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Belleṅgi leaves on the hedges, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Dance with your backs bent, sisters, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Thāli dance has language another, Thāliyaa leleelaa
If I don't say it, my lips will, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Spathe-cap on head, hair parted, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Pendant on hair, saree graceful, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Saree graceful, eye-black too, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli language I know not, Thāliyaa leleelaa
To our Thāli we've lent our voice, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Thāli has just a piece of cloth, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli after dance went to rest, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Gods entered inner sanctum, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Bhutas went to shrines to stay, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Goblins went to burial grounds there, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa
Thāli Thāli leleele, Thāliyaa leleelaa

Tulu Original: "Thāli" in K. Abhayakumar, *Mugēraru- Janāṅga, Jānapada Adhyayana,* Directorate of Kannada and Culture, Bengaluru and Karnataka Tulu Sahitya Academy, Mangaluru, 1995

41. Our Lady Darane

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

Somewhere up the ghats, our lady Darane...
Somewhere in garden of flowers, our lady Darane...
Somewhere in sugarcane fields, our lady Darane...
Somewhere was she born, our lady Darane...

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

Wants to come down from ghats, our lady Darane...[52]
Which route does she take? our lady Darane...
Venur route does she take, our lady Darane...
On the back of the bull she rides, our lady Darane...

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

Wants to come down from ghats, our lady Darane...
Which route does she take? our lady Darane...
Puttur route does she take, our lady Darane...
To the tune of flute she comes, our lady Darane...

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[52] In this poem the reference is to a woman from up the ghats coming down to Tulunadu to find employment there. The poem shows how women workers were exposed to sexual exploitation from those who employ them.

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

Wants to come down from ghats, our lady Darane...
Which route does she take? our lady Darane...
Bantwala route does she take, our lady Darane...
She walks all the way, she does, our lady Darane...
She walks with peacocks, she does, our lady Darane...

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

Takes she pounding pits seven, our lady Darane...
Takes she paddy to pound in pits seven, our lady Darane...
Paddy she boils and spreads, our lady Darane...
Chases she crows and peacocks away, our lady Darane...

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

Takes she pestle of kino rose-wood, our lady Darane...
Takes she winnowing pan so fine, our lady Darane...
In stone-pit she pounds paddy well, our lady Darane...
Sweep she does in broom-stick short, our lady Darane...

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

Pounds the paddy hard, she does, our lady Darane...
Winnows it well, she does it well, our lady Darane...
Fast she sweeps paddy and husk, our lady Darane...

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

Then come landlords two, our lady Darane...
One comes from one side, our lady Darane...
Another from another side, our lady Darane...
Wink they at each other, our lady Darane...

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

Pull her they to hut so old, our lady Darane...
Share they her well, our lady Darane..
Make her lie prone, do our lords, our lady Darane...
Pound her well turn by turn, our lady Darane...
She writhed and sighed at every turn, our lady Darane...

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

By the time they return, our lady Darane...
Lo! Darane becomes pregnant, our lady Darane...
Soon she is pregnant of three months, our lady Darane...
Soon her belly is big for six months, our lady Darane...

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

Hurry she does to God's feet, our lady Darane...
She goes round God's shrine, our lady Darane...
Joins she the *bhūtas*, she does, our lady Darane...

Goes around she with the *bhūtas*, our lady Darane...
To the ancestors she is gathered, our lady Darane...[53]

Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...
Thaanaana Thandaana, our lady Darane...

Tulu Original: "Thāli" in K. Abhayakumar, *Mugēraru- Janāṅga, Jānapada Adhyayana*, Directorate of Kannada and Culture, Bengaluru and Karnataka Tulu Sahitya Academy, Mangaluru, 1995

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[53] The notion of being gathered to 'the *bhūtas*' or ancestors is a familiar motif in Tulu oral epics for dying. It could be suicide or murder or even death in battle. It is not normal death, but an unnatural death. The idea is that those who suffer such an injustice become *bhūtas* or *daivas* and acquire powers which they did not have when alive. Here there is no suggestion that the exploited woman who dies becomes anything like a *daiva* herself, though.

42. The Song of Bairi

Thaana thandaana Bairi,[54] *Bairi thandaana...*
Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...

Where were you born, Bairi, where were you brought up?
Up the ghats, Bairi, or in the Tulu land?

Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...

Children how many Bairi, how many children have you?
Six and three there were, but they are all dead now

Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...

When Baira man was alive, Bairi had a vermilion dot
After Baira man is no more, Bairi has nothing of that sort

Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...

When Baira man was alive, Bairi had flowers on her hair
After Baira man is no more, Bairi has nothing on her hair

---

[54] Bairi is the name of a woman. It also suggests that she belongs to a woman of the Baira community.

Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...

When Baira man was alive, Bairi had many sarees to wear
After Baira man is no more, Bairi has such thing to wear

Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...

When Baira man was alive, Bairi had many a blouse to wear
After Baira man is no more, Bairi has no blouse to wear

Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...

When Baira man was alive, Bairi had many a petticoat to wear
After Baira man is no more, Bairi has no petticoats to wear

Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...

When Baira man was alive, Bairi had loincloth to wear
After Baira man is no more, Bairi has not even that to wear

Thaana thandaana Bairi Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi Bairi thandaana...

When Baira man was alive, Bairi had blanket of wool to cover
After Baira man is no more, Bairi has nothing of that sort to cover

Thaana thandaana Bairi Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi Bairi thandaana...

When Baira man was alive, Bairi drank her toddy in coconut shell
After Baira man is no more, Bairi has no toddy to drink

Thaana thandaana Bairi Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi Bairi thandaana...

Death of Baira, makes Bairi''s neck thin as heron's
After her children died, Bairi's eyes were like crow's!

Thaana thandaana Bairi Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi Bairi thandaana...

Death of Baira, makes Bairi an inauspicious widow
After her children died, Bairi's mouth had only a clod of earth to chew![55]

Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...
Thaana thandaana Bairi, Bairi thandaana...

Tulu Original: "Bairi" in K. Abhayakumar, *Mugēraru- Janāṅga, Jānapada Adhyayana*, Directorate of Kannada and Culture, Bengaluru and Karnataka Tulu Sahitya Academy, Mangaluru, 1995

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[55] The imagery of 'a clod of earth to chew' is very familiar in both Tulu and Kannada. It is suggestive of death and burial, of 'having nothing', an imprecation that 'You go to hell!'

43. The Song of Kunhakka

Leleele leele leleelaa... leleele lele leleelaa
Leleele leele leleelaa... leleele lele leleelaa

Come hither too, Kunha, come thither too...
Cover your head with the saree you have worn, Kunha
Carefully cross the log-bridge, Kunha
Leleele leele leleelaa... leleele lele leleelaa

They take away our Kunha, they take her far away!
Festoon of mango leaves they tie and take her away!
Not even three months has she completed, our Kunha
Inside her belly roll young ones like elephant calves

Leleele leele leleelaa... leleele lele leleelaa
Leleele leele leleelaa... leleele lele leleelaa

Let's go, Kunha, let's go to Madikeri
Tell your father, tell your mother, let's go to Madikeri
Yonder we see, O Kunha, we see there our land!
Beyond Bangadi, O Kunha, we see there our land!

Leleele leele leleelaa... leleele lele leleelaa
Leleele leele leleelaa... leleele lele leleelaa

Let's go, Kunha, let's go to Madikeri
Tell your landlord, tell your mistress, let's go to Madikeri
Leleele leele leleelaa... leleele lele leleelaa

Leleele leele leleelaa... leleele lele leleelaa
Leleele leele leleelaa... leleele lele leleelaa

Tulu Original: "Kuññana Pada" in Koira N. Balepuni, *Mugērara Duḍi Kuṇitagaḷu - Swarūpa mattu Samskriti,* Dudi Prakashana, Balepuni, Bantwal, 2010

44. Looking for a Bride

We should look for a bride,[56] Panchala Mera of woodland said
At the field beyond, at Kontala Mera's hut

Five of the caste and three of the family
Did Panchala Mera collect, did our woodland man
Took they betel leaves of two kinds, pungent and rough
Took they areca nuts, twelve in number
Went they to look for a bride, Panchala Mera of woodland
To the field beyond, at Kontala Mera's hut

Descended they steps sixteen soon
Reached fields low and reached fields wide
Crossed they fields low and crossed fields wide
Crossed they a hill and another field too
They walked and walked to Kontala Mera's hut
They walked and walked to reach Kontala Mera's hut

The girl there, our Maaniga, was plaiting a mat
Where is your mother, child?
Where has your father gone? They asked
Mother has gone to a neighbour's hut
To attend a joyous ritual of puberty

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[56] 'Looking for a bride' is a serious social activity in which marriage alliances are struck and announced. In the context of 'arranged marriages' which Indian society proudly swears by, marriage is more than the union of man and woman; it is the joining together of two families.

Father has gone to labour in
A nearby laeterite quarry, she said

Before the tongue she spoke settled in the throat
Her mother and father returned home
Did you just come now, guests?
Have you waited long?
We have been here for sometime now!
Didn't you give them anything to sit on, daughter,
Didn't you offer anything to sate their thirst?

Now Kontala Mera of the field beyond
Offered Panchala Mera and guests,
Mat to sit and water cool to quench the thirst
Guests drank the water to sate their thirst
Chewed they betel leaves and nuts

Chatted the guests about this news and that
Passed their verdicts on this event or that
Then setting all aside, they
Talked about the bride they were looking for

Have you a girl to offer, have you a buffalo for sale?
Had indeed a buffalo for sale, dear guests
But it has already been sold!
We had a girl to offer, dear guests,
But she has already been married off!

We are not here to pat the back and put the rope
On the buffalo you have sold away already
We are not to here to pay bride- price and buy back
The girl you have married off already

We are here to talk about the girl at home
Will you give away to our boy the girl you have at home?

We could certainly have given her away
But the girl is too small and innocent
She cannot sweep the dust in four corners
To one corner in the house, that girl!
She cannot gather her hair to tie a knot
She can't even decant the rice on boil
She is small and so young, dear guests!

If the girl is small and untrained
We have girls we have brought
Surely they will teach the girl what should be taught
We can fill your girl happily the household of ours
Saying these words did the guests
They settled on the girl they were looking for
Exchanged they the betel leaves and nuts they carried
They settled on the girl they were looking for.

Tulu Original: "Poṇṇu Thūpuna Pada" in Koira N. Balepuni, *Mugērara Duḍi Kuṇitagaḷu - Swarūpa mattu Samskriti,* Dudi Prakashana, Balepuni, Bantwal, 2010

45. The Song of Tiger and Cow

Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee
Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee

Women there are seven and men there are seven
Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee

Men seven moved along herds of cattle long
Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee

Women seven walked along rows of flowers long
Those who walked along rows of flowers
Plucked flowers of *Maderu* on the creeper
When petals of flowers they opened soon
Gazed they at the pollen grains so colourful

Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee
Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee

Gazed they at the pollen grains so colourful
Wondered whose colour grains they were
They were of Lord Ishwara, verily of Ishwara!

Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee
Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee

Men seven who moved along herds of cattle long
Reached they cowsheds belonging to the lord
Reaching there, our men seven,
Ate their fill of rice and gruel
Eating their fill of rice and gruel,
Reached they all the *Maderu* forest

Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee
Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee

Where were you born, tiger, sick and hungry?
What work you do, Tiger brother?

Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee
Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee

Tawny-coloured cow of *Māderu* forest
Ate all the tender-shoots of crops they grew

Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee
Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee

Was she cursed by angry god?
She be grabbed and eaten by tiger hungry?

Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee
Denna dennaa denna dennaa... denna dennaayee

Tulu Original: "Pili-Pañji" in Koira N. Balepuni, *Mugērara Duḍi Kuṇitagaḷu - Swarūpa mattu Samskriti,* Dudi Prakashana, Balepuni, Bantwal, 2010

[Note: The title of the song given in the Tulu original is 'Pili-Pañji' or 'The Tiger and Boar'. There is nothing of the Boar in the song; only the cow figures in it along with the tiger. Hence the choice of the title in our translation. The reason why 'The Tiger and the Boar' figures in the Tulu original is that the Dance is generally classified as such, and the song is sung in that context, although the *dramatis personae* there can be joyfully different!]

46. The Song of Tiger and Boar

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Where is the tiger born, asks Ishwara our Lord
Born he is in a cage; prosper, blesses our Lord!
Where is the serpent born, asks Baasinga our Lord
Born he is in an anthill; prosper, blesses our Lord!

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Tiger cub is caught, where is he kept, asks our Lord
Caught they the tiger cub, put they in a box, says our Lord!
Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

What work will you do, tiger dear, dotted all over?
Can you work with hoe, tiger dear, dotted all over?
Can you plough the field, tiger dear, dotted all over?
But tiger wouldn't open his mouth, dotted all over!

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Thirty heads of cattle he has, has our Lord!
Forty buffaloes too he has, has our Lord!
Will you graze them all, tiger dear, dotted all over?
Suddenly he spoke an yes, tiger dear, dotted all over!

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Woke up he, dear tiger, at the dawn, bless O my Lord!
Ate his fill of yesterday's gruel, bless O my Lord!
Picked up his betel nuts and all, bless O my Lord!
Drove all the cattle far to graze, bless O my Lord!

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Took them to *Māderu* forest, bless O my Lord
He saw them graze in the forest, bless O my Lord
He took them to groves and thickets, bless O my Lord
Moving them around, he grazed them, bless O my Lord

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Took them to hill where canes grow, bless O my Lord
Followed them he everywhere, bless O my Lord
That done, thirty were short of three, bless O my Lord!
That done, forty were short of four, bless O my Lord!

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Sits he like a stump, our tiger, bless O my Lord!
Like a bird he flies, our tiger, bless O my Lord!
He pounces like a coconut, our tiger, bless O my Lord!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Stares he up the sky to see the omen, bless O my Lord!
Stamps his hands on ground to make a vow, bless O my Lord!
Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

His head is like a decorated pot, bless O my Lord!
His eyes shine like fire-flies, bless O my Lord!
Wrapped he is in splashes of colour, bless O my Lord!
Wear he does angry stripes of colour, bless O my Lord!

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Catches he Kunha's ox with dot on forehead, my Lord!
Catches he Narayana's grey ox of real grace, my Lord!
Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Now he played a game of hunt, Ishwara our Lord!
He hunts the tiger and hunts the boar, Iswara our Lord!
Takes out from the attic a bow real old, Ishwara our Lord!
Takes he out from the loft arrow bathed in soot, our Lord!

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Jumps hither, Lord Ishwara, bless O my Lord!
Shoots an arrow, Lord Ishwara, bless O my Lord!
Jumps he, tiger, to escape the arrow, bless O my Lord!

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Reaches he the throat of the cow, our tiger
Mangles he the cow and its belly, our tiger
Gorges he his fill, with flesh, fresh or stale
Stinks he with the rotten flesh he eats, all over

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Barges in then a boar fierce, bless O my Lord!
Challenges he the tiger, bless O my Lord!
They grab each other and fight, bless O my Lord!
Tiger tucks his tail to hide in the cage, bless O my Lord!

Come hither, tiger cub, come hither and grow!
Come hither and prosper, bless O my Lord!

Tulu Original: "Pili-Pañji" in Yadupathi Gowda D, 'Belthangadi Parisarada Mērara Kuṇitagaḷu', M.Phil Dissertation, submitted to Mangalore University, 1990

47. The Song of the Buffalo Race

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila![57]
To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
How festive wondrous buffaloes arrive, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
Arrive they grandly in twin planks,[58] O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
Arrive they with many signs auspicious, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
Arrive they with their horns adorned, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
Arrive they with trappings grand, O Mayila!

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[57] Mayila is the name of the servant, belonging to the Dalit community. Only such servants were appointed to look after the race-buffaloes, but they were forbidden to race them, because buffalo-race had the aura of an agrarian ritual besides being a sport and an occasion to announce one's social power.
[58] Twin-planks in a buffalo-race stand for the planks used in one mode of buffalo-race in which water in the slushy field is squirted up to reach the cloth-banner tied high up along the racing field. The other two modes of the buffalo-race are, one, in which buffaloes are tied to a yoke and held in a rope while racing them, and the other in which the yoked buffaloes symbolically carry a plough as they run.

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
Arrive they to the trumpet's tune, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
Arrive they to the sound of Koraga's drum, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
Arrive they in groups galore, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
Arrive they to the sound of band and bugle, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
Arrive they in throngs so many, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
Arrive they with their dotted tails, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
Arrive they with dots on foreheads, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!

To our, to our famed buffalo-race, O Mayila!
How festive wondrous buffaloes arrive, O Mayila!

Tulu Original: "Kambulada Pāḍdana" in Koira N. Balepuni, *Mugērara Duḍi Kuṇitagaḷu - Swarūpa mattu Samskriti,* Dudi Prakashana, Balepuni, Bantwal, 2010

48. The Song of Koragu

Nananaa... naanaana... naanana...
Nananaa... naanaana... naanana...

Look at our Koragu...[59] look at her!
Look at our Koragu... look at her!

Bloomed has she, our Koragu, bloomed she has
Bloomed she has, like *Aḍkare* flowers in the wild!

Look at our Koragu... look at her!
Look at our Koragu... look at her!

Split wide has she, our Koragu, split wide she has
Split wide she has, like *Allaṅgāyi* nut in the wild!

Look at our Koragu... look at her!
Look at our Koragu... look at her!

Splashed red has she, our Koragu, splashed red she has
Splashed red she has, like *Kēpuḷa* flowers in the wild!

Look at our Koragu... look at her!
Look at our Koragu... look at her!

---

[59] Koragu is the name of a woman belonging to the dalit community of Koragas. The song describes the way her womanhood blooms spectacularly and the dangers it invites from many a prowling presence.

Withered has she, our Koragu, withered she has
Withered she has like brinjal flowers in the sun

Look at our Koragu... look at her!
Look at our Koragu... look at her!

Hither you have Moutain-Sun, thither Mountain-Moon
In Miracle-makers' hand they became Mountain-One!

Look at our Koragu... look at her!
Look at our Koragu... look at her!

Under wild palmyra tree lurks a mongoose wild
Dogs are prowling here, dear, run for your life!

Look at our Koragu... look at her!
Look at our Koragu... look at her!

Hover around vultures, our Koragu, vultures are around
Yonder in the field near jungle, vultures hover around!

Look at our Koragu... look at her!
Look at our Koragu... look at her!

Take your sickle, O Koragu, collect your basket!
Take your sickle, O Koragu, collect your basket!

Nananaa... naanaana... naanana...
Nananaa... naanaana... naanana...

Look at our Koragu... look at her!
Look at our Koragu... look at her!

Tulu Original: "Koragu" in Yadupathi Gowda D, "Belthangadi Parisarada Mērara Kuṇitagaḷu", M.Phil Dissertation, submitted to Mangalore University, 1990

49. The Song of Bride Charming

Bride charming, our daughter, bride charming!
Bride charming, our daughter, bride charming!

Go round slowly, daughter our bride, go round carefully![60]
The field-path readied with wet mud is slippery as yet, dear!
Go round slowly, daughter our bride, go round carefully!

Looking at bridegroom's hair reminds us
Of bitter-gourd's bower!
Our fair bride-daughter's hair is like
A pot of flavoured hair-oil!

Go round slowly, daughter our bride, go round carefully!
Bride charming, our daughter, bride charming!

The field-path readied with wet mud is slippery as yet, dear!
Go round slowly, daughter our bride, go round carefully!

Leaving today, daughter, our bride charming,
When do you plan to return, dear?[61]
When hair turns grey and breasts need no cover
Will you at least care to return, daughter dear?

---

[60] Going round slowly is a reference to the familiar ritual at the wedding in which the bride and the bride-groom go round fire, lamp, or any other symbols of auspiciousness to confirm their resolve to be together for the rest of their lives.

[61] The phrase is suggestive of the belief that a girl is 'given away in marriage', that once married she no longer belongs to her parents. Hence the counsel of caution and words of assurance expressed in the poem.

The field-path readied with wet mud is slippery as yet, dear!
Go round slowly, daughter our bride, go round carefully!

Seeing bridegroom's teeth reminds us
Of bunch of soap-nuts dry!
Our bride's row of teeth reminds us
Of coconut gratings white!

Going there you are to make your life, dear
To the northern land, daughter dear!
There you have, our daughter dear,
Bangles to wear and jewels to adorn!

Bride charming, our daughter, bride charming!
Bride charming, our daughter, bride charming!
The field-path readied with wet mud is slippery as yet, dear!
Go round slowly, daughter our bride, go round carefully!

Come, daughter dear, weep not daughter dear!
There you have a mother in mother-in-law, for sure!
There you have a father in father-in-law, for sure!
Bride charming, our daughter, bride charming!
Go round slowly, daughter our bride, go round carefully!

There you have a brother in brother-in-law, dear daughter!
There you have sister in sister-in-law, dear daughter!
Bride charming, our daughter, bride charming!
Go round slowly, daughter our bride, go round carefully!

Tulu Original: "Dārilo" in Koira N. Balepuni, *Mugērara Duḍi Kuṇitagaḷu - Swarūpa mattu Samskriti,* Dudi Prakashana, Balepuni, Bantwal, 2010

50. The Song of Gāṇathimmu

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu,[62] *our lady!*
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

What mighty work you do, Gāṇathimmu, our lady?
Of what family are you, Gāṇathimmu, our lady?

What mighty work you do, Gāṇathimmu, our lady?
Oil-pressing work I do, Gāṇathimmu, our lady

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Early in the morn she gets up, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Folds up the mat she slept on, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Hurry she does for work, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Hurry she does inside the house, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Clears the hearth of its ashes, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Sweeps the house inside and out, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

---

[62] The name of the woman here is Thimmu, but she is addressed as Gāṇathimmu because she is professionally an oil-presser. 'Gāṇa' can mean an oil-press; it can also be a contraption with which sugarcane is crushed for making jaggery. The ox commissioned to work at the oil-press is portrayed as the one pushed into unrelieved slavery and drudgery. Our Thimmu similarly carries that image.

Fills she water in wooden trough, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
For use of her man, the oil-presser, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Puts rice-bits to boil for her man to eat, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Where have you gone? Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Listen to what I say, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Unused cradle should dry in the sun, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Should ready for me hot water pleasant, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Ready he gets, the man the oil-presser, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Picks up his sack, the oil-presser, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Says he, he is off on his business, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Says he is off to collect coconuts dry, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Takes she pail and vessels, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Goes to the well, she does, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Cleans up the wooden trough, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Fills she it with water fresh, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Draws a pot-full of water from the well, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Washes well her face and limbs, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Draws another pot-full of water clean, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Pours it into an earthen pot, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Picks it up to her waist with care, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Goes inside her house, does Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Goes inside her house, does Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Takes she a bronze-pail of water, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Taking she a bronze-pail of water, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Heads she to the cattle-shed, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Heading to the cattle-shed, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Collects she cow-dung fresh, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Collecting the dung of tawny-cow, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Returns she home, does Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, *our lady!*
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, *our lady!*

Entering her house, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Sprinkles she does water and dung, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Comes out of the house, does Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Sweeps the dung thick, does Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Lights she the hearth, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Places a vessel of water to boil, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Takes out rice from hay-pack round, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Taking out rice from hay-pack round, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Washes it well in water clean, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Washing it well in water clean, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Places she it to boil in milk, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

With rice yet cooking, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
She sets out to cook the curry, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Wears she a saree of flower designs, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Picks up a basket small of reed, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Picking up a basket small of reed, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
She picks up a little golden knife too, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Walking along she goes out, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
She goes to the eastern garden, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Reaching the eastern garden, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
She comes upon a gate of thorns, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Opening the gate of thorns, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
She goes inside the eastern garden, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

From the garden she picks up, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
She picks up bitter-gourds many, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
She picks up long-beans by handful, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Setting off from eastern garden, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Reaches she her home, dear home, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Reaching she her home, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Drains water from rice cooked, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Getting up from there, does Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Sets out to cut vegetables, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Setting out to cut vegetables, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Takes she wide-mouthed earthen vessel, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Taking she wide-mouthed earthen vessel, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Sits she on a scythe-fixed board, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Sitting she on a scythe-fixed board, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Washes she vegetables she collected, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Washing vegetables, she cut them well, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

She places vegetables to boil, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
As vegetables are cooking, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
She goes to the bath-room there, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
She goes to bath-room to heat water, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

There she hears her husband call, Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
'Where are you' Gāṇathimmu, our lady?
'Where have you gone' Gāṇathimmu, our lady?
'Bring the ox here!' Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
'Ox to yoke the oil-press' Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!
Leleela leleele.. Gāṇathimmu, our lady!

Tulu Original: "Gāṇanthālu" in Koira N. Balepuni, *Mugērara Duḍi Kuṇitagaḷu - Swarūpa mattu Samskriti,* Dudi Prakashana, Balepuni, Bantwal, 2010

51. The Song of the Plough-Maker

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Which age you belong to, dear maker of plough?
Which family you hail from, dear maker of plough?
Belong I to the age of Kadri god, your maker of plough!
Belong I to the family of Bedra god,[63] your maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Which caste are you, dear maker of plough?
What tradition is yours, dear maker of plough?
Belong I to the *nāyeru* lineage, your maker of plough!
Adhere I to tradition of Truth, your maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

If you belong to *nāyeru* caste, dear maker of plough,
What work do you do, dear maker of plough?
O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

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[63] 'Bedra' is the Tulu name for Moodubidre. It is a well-known Jain centre. Which god does the maker of the plough invoke is not clear. Apparently Bedra rhymes with Kadri, in the previous sentence. The latter is the seat of a famous temple and a centre of the Natha sect.

Do you wield the spade, dear maker of plough?
Do you yoke the oxen and plough, dear maker of plough?
No! That work I cannot do, your maker of plough!
Retreats he from where he sits, our maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

What else work do you do, dear maker of plough?
Can you cut grass for cattle to eat, dear maker of plough?
Can you reset the path between fields, dear maker of plough?
No! That work I cannot do, your maker of plough!
Retreats he from where he sits, our maker of plough!

What else work do you do, dear maker of plough?
O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Can you cut green leaves for manure, dear maker of plough?
Can you cut green leaves for manure, dear maker of plough?
No! That work I cannot do, your maker of plough!
Retreats he from where he sits, our maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Can you graze the cattle, dear maker of plough?
Can you graze the cattle, dear maker of plough?
No! That work I cannot do, your maker of plough!
Retreats he from where he sits, our maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

If you belong to *nāyeru* caste, dear maker of plough,
Wear a piece of cloth, dear maker of plough!
Put on a shirt, dear maker of cloth!
Tie up the top-knot, dear maker of plough!
Put on the spathe-cap, dear maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

What work you want to do, dear maker of plough?
What else you want to do, dear maker of plough?
Will you make a plough, dear maker of plough?
Can you make a plough, dear maker of plough?
Surely I make a plough, says dear maker of plough!
Steps forward he from where he sits, our maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Gets he up early in the dawn, our dear maker of plough
Goes he to the platform of the well, our maker of plough
Going to the platform of the well, our maker of plough
Draws he water pure from the well, our maker of plough
Washes he his face and limbs, our maker of plough
Washing his face and limbs, our maker of plough
Draws he a pail of water, our maker of plough
Drawing he a pail of water, our maker of plough
Turns he to the east to bow to the sun, our maker of plough

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Draws he a pail of water, our maker of plough
Takes he water inside the house, our maker of plough

Taking he water inside the house, our maker of plough
Keeps he on the plank in corner, our maker of plough

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Picks he a goblet of gold, our maker of plough
Picks he a piece of sandalwood, our maker of plough
Picking a piece of sandalwood, our maker of plough
Takes a grindstone flat, our dear maker of plough

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Goes he to platform of holy basil, our maker of plough
Going he to platform of holy basil, our maker of plough
Grinds he the piece of sandal he brought, our maker of plough
Grinds he it with full strength of his palm, our maker of plough
Grinding he it with full strength of his palm, our maker of plough
Adorns he himself with sandal paste, our maker of plough
Adorns his forehead with sandal dot, our maker of plough
Smears his chest with sandal paste, our maker of plough
Makes a curvy sign on his arms, our maker of plough

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Sharpened chisel he tucks into his waist, our maker of plough
Carries he in his arms sharpened adze, our maker of plough
Carries he on his shoulder sharpened axe, our maker of plough
Slings he in the waist-hook the sharpened scythe, our maker of plough

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Goes he to *Māderu* forest thick, our maker of plough
Sees he *kāyeru* tree very strong, our maker of plough
Seeing he *kāyeru* tree very strong, our maker of plough
He goes round the tree thrice, our maker of plough
Going round the tree thrice, our maker of plough
Prostrates he to the tree, our maker of plough

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Clears he weeds and thickets below, our maker of plough
Shears he down such growths so wild, our maker of plough
Starts he by wounding a tree, our maker of plough
Cuts he an elephantine wound on the tree, our maker of plough
Slices flew off like prancing horses, our maker of plough!
Groaning of the tree is heard a hundred miles away!
Grunting of the tree is heard a thousand miles away!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Fells he the tree on the ground, our maker of plough
Felling the tree on the ground, our maker of plough
Measures he the tree with three steps, our maker of plough
Cuts he it down to the size of the plough, our maker of plough
Cutting down the tree to the size of the plough, our maker of plough
Hacks he it with adze, our maker of plough
Shapes he it with chisel, our maker of plough
Makes he the plough, our maker of plough!
Takes he his plough, our maker of plough
Heads he to his house, our maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Reaching home he gets the news, our maker of plough
He gets the news that army wants him, our maker of plough
Will you join the army, our maker of plough?
Saying yes, he carries a hefty gun, our maker of plough
Slings he on his waist sword very long, our maker of plough
Swaying a sharpened sword, he heads, our maker of plough
He heads to the battlefield that beckons, our maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Ranged he is against Nayar army of the south
On shoulder he carries a hefty gun, our maker of plough
Slings he on his waist sword very long, our maker of plough
Swaying a sharpened sword, he heads, our maker of plough
He heads to the battlefield that beckons, our maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Ranged he is against Kodava army of the east
On shoulder he carries a hefty gun, our maker of plough
Slings he on his waist sword very long, our maker of plough
Swaying a sharpened sword, he heads, our maker of plough
He heads to the battlefield that beckons, our maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Ranged he is against Banga army of the west
On shoulder he carries a hefty gun, our maker of plough
Slings he on his waist sword very long, our maker of plough

Swaying a sharpened sword, he heads, our maker of plough
He heads to the battlefield that beckons, our maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Stands he astride against the enemy, our maker of plough!
Forging ahead, he slices them down, our maker of plough!

O our man, dear maker of plough!
O our man, dear maker of plough!

Tulu Original: "Nāyerumāro" in Koira N. Balepuni, *Mugērara Duḍi Kuṇitagaḷu - Swarūpa mattu Samskriti,* Dudi Prakashana, Balepuni, Bantwal, 2010

['Our maker of plough' or *Nāyermār* apparently refers to the professional maker of plough. The poem speaks of his domestic routine and professional work. At the same time it speaks of the summons he receives to join the army and his transformation as a gun-carrying, sword-wielding soldier, fighting the enemies like the Nayars of the south, Kodavas of the east and the Bangas of the west. Literally a case of 'beating the ploughshare into sword'! May be this poem must have originated in the Sullia region of Tulunadu, as evidenced from the directions from which the enemies seem to descend. Incidentally, there is a *bhūta* in this region called '*Nāyer bhūta*', apparently the one who was killed in the battle. The *Nāyermār* cannot be equated with the Nayars of Kerala. The former must have formed a separate social group, as evidenced by the presence of *Nāyeru baḷi* (one of the names of lineages or kinship groups invoked) among certain castes.]

52. The One who shakes off Red-Ants

Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!
Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!

On which tree is he who shakes off red-ants?
Is he on *Kāyeru* tree, he who shakes off red-ants?
He is on *Kāyeru* tree, he who shakes off red-ants!

Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!
Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!

Will you climb up with sickle, he who shakes off red-ants?
Will you chop off those branches, he who shakes off red-ants?
Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!

He shakes the tree-branch, he who shakes off red-ants!
Scratches he where they bite, he who shakes off red-ants!
Eggs there are, but red-ants none! Grab eggs by handfull!
Eggs there are, but red-ants none! Grab eggs by handfull!

Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!
Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!

On which tree is he who shakes off red-ants?
Is he on *Taroḷi* tree, he who shakes off red-ants?
He is on *Taroḷi* tree, he who shakes off red-ants!

Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!
Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!

Will you climb up with sickle, he who shakes off red-ants?
Will you chop off those branches, he who shakes off red-ants?
He shakes the tree-branch, he who shakes off red-ants!
Scratches he where they bite, he who shakes off red-ants!
Eggs there are, but red-ants none! Grab eggs by handful!
Eggs there are, but red-ants none! Grab eggs by handful!

Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!
Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!

On which tree is he who shakes off red-ants?
Is he on cashew tree, he who shakes off red-ants?
He is on cashew tree, he who shakes off red-ants!

Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!
Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!

Will you climb up with sickle, he who shakes off red-ants?
Will you chop off those branches, he who shakes off red-ants?
He shakes the tree-branch, he who shakes off red-ants!
Scratches he where they bite, he who shakes off red-ants!
Eggs there are, but red-ants none! Grab eggs by handful!
Eggs there are, but red-ants none! Grab eggs by handful!

On which tree is he who shakes off red-ants?
Is he on mango tree, he who shakes off red-ants?
He is on mango tree, he who shakes off red-ants!

Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!
Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!

Will you climb up with sickle, he who shakes off red-ants?
Will you chop off those branches, he who shakes off red-ants?

He shakes the tree-branch, he who shakes off red-ants!
Scratches he where they bite, he who shakes off red-ants!
Eggs there are, but red-ants none! Grab eggs by handful!
Eggs there are, but red-ants none! Grab eggs by handful!

Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!
Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!

On which tree is he who shakes off red-ants?
Is he on jack-fruit tree, he who shakes off red-ants?
He is on jack-fruit tree, he who shakes off red-ants!

Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!
Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!

Will you climb up with sickle, he who shakes off red-ants?
Will you chop off those branches, he who shakes off red-ants?
He shakes the tree-branch, he who shakes off red-ants!
Scratches he where they bite, he who shakes off red-ants!
Eggs there are, but red-ants none! Grab eggs by handful!
Eggs there are, but red-ants none! Grab eggs by handful!

Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!
Leleela lelele... you who shakes off red-ants!

Tulu Original: "Urikuḍpele" in Koira N. Balepuni, *Mugērara Duḍi Kuṇitagaḷu - Swarūpa mattu Samskriti,* Dudi Prakashana, Balepuni, Bantwal, 2010

[‘The One who shakes off Red-Ants’ can be understood only in the context of food habits forced on certain poor Dalit communities living close to nature. They forage red-ants and their eggs, fry and make chutney of them. The task of finding hives of red-ants and collecting them and their eggs is not without its risks. They bite in concert those who interfere with them, causing uncomfortable itching and irritation. *Uri* in Tulu refers to both the red-ants and the irritation they cause! The one who goes out to collect red-ants has to pay a little price too and becomes ‘the one who shakes off red-ants’ ‘after scratching where they bite’. These actions and reactions become part of a group-dance performed by the community!]

53. My Brother-in-law and I

Hoina...hoina... hoi hoi leleela!
Hoina...hoina... hoi hoi leleela!

Last year, we together, my brother-in-law and I
Together we ploughed the field, hoina... hoina leleela!

Last year, we together, my brother-in-law and I
Together we collected green leaves, hoina... hoina leleela!

Hoina...hoina... hoi hoi leleela!
Hoina...hoina... hoi hoi leleela!

Last year, we together, my brother-in-law and I
Together we plucked paddy seedlings, hoina... hoina leleela!

Last year, we together, my brother-in-law and I
Together we harvested the field, hoina... hoina leleela!

Hoina...hoina... hoi hoi leleela!
Hoina...hoina... hoi hoi leleela!

Last year, we together, my brother-in-law and I
Together we threshed the paddy, hoina... hoina leleela!

Last year, we together, my brother-in-law and I
Together we drank our toddy, hoina... hoina leleela!

Hoina...hoina... hoi hoi leleela!
Hoina...hoina... hoi hoi leleela!

Tulu Original: "Hoina... hoina... leleela" in Koira N. Balepuni, *Mugērara Duḍi Kuṇitagaḷu - Swarūpa mattu Samskriti,* Dudi Prakashana, Balepuni, Bantwal, 2010

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K. Chinnappa Gowda (born 1955) is a retired Professor of Kannada, Mangalore University and was, for a while, the Vice Chancellor of Karnataka Folklore University. Among his more important works are Bhūtārādhane: Jānapadīya Adhyayana, Samskriti Siri, Jālāṭa, Mask and the Message. He is also a translator and editor of 'Ladle in a Golden Bowl' (English translation of modern tulu poems, 2017). He and Prof. B. Surendra Rao have translated Dr. D.K. Chowta's tulu novel 'Mittabail Yamunakka' (2018). He was one of the editors, along with Lauri Honko, Anneli Honko and Viveka Rai, of Siri Epic as Performed by Gopala Naika (2 vols.) He has visited Tubingen (Germany) Turku (Finland) and Waseda (Japan) universities on various academic assignments. He is a recipient of many prestigious awards.

Tulu needs to draw upon the unlimited literary and cultural opulence from other tongues and cultures, while it should feel confident to present its own riches to the rest of the world. That, we are sure, will help us claim the rightful status of honour to Tulu and to those who speak that language. Such serious publications will enable us to stake Tulu's claims for inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

This excellent translation of Tulu *Kabitas* and dance songs, the first of its kind, should blaze a new trail and inspire others to labour for the Tulu cause.

A.C. Bhandari
President
Karnataka Tulu Sahitya Academy

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